INQUISITIONS • EDUARDO GALEANO

THE Nation.

THE DEATH OF DR. TILLER
EYAL PRESS

THE CIA'S LEGACY OF LIES
TIM WEINER

CIVIL RIGHTS UP NORTH
SCOTT SAUL

IRAQ'S NEW DEATH SQUAD

INSIDE THE U.S.-MADE 'DIRTY BRIGADE'

SHANE BAUER

JUNE 22, 2009
TheNation.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MAKE THE SWITCH

CONTRACT BUYOUT
+
FREE CAMERA PHONE
+
AUTOMATIC DONATIONS

Doing good in the world doesn't have to come at the cost of good service. At CREDO Mobile, we offer quality plans and coverage while making donations to progressive nonprofits. And with this special offer, we'll buy out your contract, making it easier than ever to get started.*

866.474.5148
credomobile.com/nowar
offer code 400472

CREDO™ mobile

more than a network.
a movement.

Brought to you by Working Assets

*All with a two-year service agreement. Offer subject to credit qualification. Contract buyout: CREDO Mobile will credit your account (up to $200) 30 days after receiving a copy of your prior carrier's termination fee charges; details to follow by mail. Offer only available to new CREDO Mobile customers.

©2009 CREDO

Letters

How Do You Say 'Sotomayor'?

Olympia, Wash.

She was raised in the projects, humble
and poor;
Among her own people she's Sotomayor.
But Barack Obama has raised her higher,
And most will now call her Sotomayor.

Paul J. Pickett

(with a tip of the hat to Calvin Trillin)

Torture by Any Other Name

Mount Dora, Fla.

It did my heart good to read Katha Pollitt's May 18 "Subject to Debate," with its mention of the Japanese use of the "water treatment"—as we called it during my two and a half years of torture, starvation and beatings, from April 1943 to September 1945. Since all the fuss about the recent US torture programs, nobody seems to refer to the Japanese use of this useless type of interrogation or how it was adjudicated at the war crimes trials in Tokyo in 1946, at which my skipper testified about our treatment at various camps (including the illegal navy camp at Ofuna).

At the trials one, perhaps more, of our guards was sentenced to hang and several more were given prison sentences. All this serves to support the prosecution of American leaders like Bush, Cheney, Addington, Yoo, etc., who planned and carried out the torture programs of the past several years.

Kevin Harty

Safe Sexting?

Pacifica, Calif.

One wonders just how long these law enforcement officials spent poring over the allegedly pornographic photographs of teens [JoAnn Wypijewski, "Through a Lens Starkly," May 18]. Did it take a minute, or maybe multiple viewings over the course of a few days, until they felt able to carefully discern whether they, the adults, felt titillated by the photos? That seems to be the standard being imposed.

Where is the line beyond which these arbiters of decency become the consumers of the (alleged) child porn? And were the laws involved really written so that children should be charged by the authorities for viewing pictures of other children? I feel confident in stating that we are alone in this practice in the Western world.

I am disturbed by the increasing number of ways our criminal justice system is finding to prosecute our children.

Chris Ostrom

Foreclosures Are Rolling Along

Medford, Ore.

Kai Wright, in "More Mortgage Madness" [May 18], hit the nail on the head! This system is broken. The government wants the loans modified, the public certainly wants to see the loans modified and the attorneys and loan modification companies can facilitate the modification; yet an almost impenetrable wall has been erected at the servicers' headquarters. Consumers should not give up hope—there are a lot of great modifications happening. But in most cases the modifications happen despite the servicers' inadequacies. This problem *is* fixable but not while inexperienced, entry-level customer service representatives of the servicers are working with inexperienced, entry-level nonprofit counselors for the borrowers.

Although bleak, this story is dead-on.

Joe Yates, *president*
LoanRefine

Lebanon, Conn.

My story mirrors Kai Wright's article. As soon as the Homeowners Affordability Stability Plan was announced by the Obama administration, I hoped I could refinance my subprime loan with Saxon Mortgage Company. After several phone calls, multiple transfers and mixed information, I was told what forms to download from their website and how to proceed. After months and many follow-up phone

(continued on page 24)

letters@thenation.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.
since 1865

Governing GM

President Obama, announcing the nationalization of General Motors—one of the more dizzying recent developments in American capitalism—sought to soothe startled free-market sensibilities by promising to "get GM back on its feet, take a hands-off approach and get out quickly." This was not enough to appease his rabid critics on the right, such as Republican National Committee chair Michael Steele, who condemned the move as "another government grab of a private company" and a "handout to the union cronies who helped bankroll his presidential campaign." The alternative course Republicans apparently prefer is the liquidation of the company, a position galling in its indifference to this country's economic and human needs.

EDITORIAL

At the same time, however, Obama's message, coming only nine weeks after his administration demanded that GM "slim down" in order to qualify for federal help, must have been hard to hear for GM workers, 21,000 of whom are slated to lose their jobs as the firm closes US plants and shifts production to low-wage countries. As Robert Reich observed of the government's stick-'em-up stance toward the auto companies, "Having General Motors or Chrysler cut tens of thousands of jobs in order to be eligible for a government bailout reminds me of 'saving' Vietnam by bombing it to smithereens."

It is more than clear by now that the goal of this intervention is not to help the workers who are suffering the effects of this devastating downturn. It is not even about saving Detroit: when pressed on whether the "new GM" would move its headquarters, the president reportedly responded that it would be a "commercial decision" and he "wouldn't get involved." Nor is this part of a bold new industrial strategy, let alone a step toward a more ecologically sustainable economy. It is a company bailout. As such, it is not only a letdown for American workers but a missed opportunity for the Obama administration to live up to its transformational rhetoric.

Some believe that the $50 billion taxpayer investment in GM is merely buying time—that the once-mighty auto giant is bound for the scrapheap, taking its remaining 60,000 jobs with it. They might be right. To be sure, the half-million-plus middle-class jobs GM used to provide as the bedrock of the economy are unlikely to return. And after the economic meltdown of the past year, we are facing a national unemployment crisis. By the administration's own estimate, the stimulus will create or save 3.6 million jobs over the next two years. But 28.5 million workers are already effectively unemployed, and 3 million more are likely to lose their jobs over the next twelve to eighteen months. Because the government has responded to this crisis by addressing the needs of companies first and foremost rather than those of workers and communities, we appear to be headed for a jobless recovery.

A smarter government policy on manufacturing could be the starting point for a long-term solution to the jobs crisis—and protect the planet at the same time. There is little question that the auto industry needs retooling. In the past decade, Americans bought more than 17 million new cars a year, many financed through home-equity loans and easy consumer credit. That economy is gone; even the rosiest of estimates puts new sales at less than 10 million a year through 2010. And even if consumer lending ultimately bounces back to pre-crash rates, the combined effect of the recession and the climate crisis may be to jolt Americans into breaking their addiction to the car culture.

Inside

2 Letters

Editorials & Comment

3 **Governing GM**

5 **Noted**

6 **A Culture War Casualty**
EYAL PRESS

7 **The CIA's Truth Problem**
TIM WEINER

8 **Capitolism**
Naming the Enemy
CHRISTOPHER HAYES

9 **The Age of Paine**
JOHN NICHOLS

Columns

6 **Deadline Poet**
Sonia Sotomayor
CALVIN TRILLIN

10 **The Liberal Media**
The Smearing of I.F. Stone, Continued
ERIC ALTERMAN

Articles

11 **Iraq's New Death Squad**
America has built an elite and lethal counterterrorism force. But who's calling the shots?
SHANE BAUER

18 **Tales of Tent City**
Boom or bust, homeless encampments are a product of inequality and neglect.
BEN EHRENREICH

22 **Inquisitions**
EDUARDO GALEANO

Books & the Arts

25 **SUGRUE:** Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North
SCOTT SAUL

32 **BACK TALK:** Graham Parker
CHRISTINE SMALLWOOD

33 **Three Books on Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln**
NICHOLAS GUYATT

35 **Women's Poetry** (POEM)
DAISY FRIED

COVER PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SHANE BAUER, DESIGN BY GENE CASE & STEPHEN KLING/AVENGING ANGELS; ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROB SUSSMAN AND ADRIAN BELLESGUARD

VOLUME 288, NUMBER 24, JUNE 22, 2009
PRINTED JUNE 3

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Nation.

EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Katrina vanden Heuvel

PRESIDENT: Teresa Stack

MANAGING EDITOR: Roane Carey (*on leave*), Mark Sorkin (*acting*)
LITERARY EDITOR: John Palattella
EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Betsy Reed
SENIOR EDITORS: Richard Lingeman, Richard Kim
WEB EDITOR: Joan Connell
COPY CHIEF: Judith Long
ASSISTANT LITERARY EDITOR: Miriam Markowitz
COPY EDITOR: Dave Baker (*acting*)
COPY ASSOCIATE: Lisa Vandepaer
ASSISTANT WEB EDITOR: Adam Howard
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR: Peggy Suttle
INTERNS: Gabriel Gil Arana, Laura C. Dean (*Washington*), Corbin W. Hiar, Uzma Kolsy, Madeleine Kuhns, Loren A. Lynch, Cassie Metcalf-Slovo, Keith Newell, Elyssa Pachico, Gabriela Resto-Montero

WASHINGTON: EDITOR: Christopher Hayes; **CORRESPONDENT:** John Nichols

NATIONAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT: William Greider

COLUMNISTS: Eric Alterman, Alexander Cockburn, Naomi Klein, Katha Pollitt, Patricia J. Williams, Gary Younge

DEPARTMENTS: *Architecture*, Jane Holtz Kay; *Corporations*, Robert Sherrill; *Defense*, Michael T. Klare; *Environment*, Mark Hertsgaard; *Films*, Stuart Klawans; *Legal Affairs*, David Cole; *Net Movement*, Ari Melber; *Peace and Disarmament*, Jonathan Schell; *Poetry*, Peter Gizzi; *Sex*, JoAnn Wypijewski; *Sports*, Dave Zirin; *United Nations*, Barbara Crossette; *Deadline Poet*, Calvin Trillin

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Kai Bird, Robert L. Borosage, Stephen F. Cohen, Marc Cooper, Arthur C. Danto, Mike Davis, Slavenka Drakulić, Robert Dreyfuss, Susan Faludi, Thomas Ferguson, Doug Henwood, Max Holland, Michael Moore, Christian Parenti, Richard Pollak, Joel Rogers, Karen Rothmyer, Robert Scheer, Herman Schwartz, Bruce Shapiro, Edward Sorel, Gore Vidal, Jon Wiener, Amy Wilentz, Art Winslow

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Ari Berman, Lakshmi Chaudhry, William Deresiewicz, Liza Featherstone, Bob Moser, Eyal Press, Scott Sherman

BUREAUS: *London*, Maria Margaronis, D.D. Guttenplan; *Southern Africa*, Mark Gevisser

EDITORIAL BOARD: Deepak Bhargava, Norman Birnbaum, Barbara Ehrenreich, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Eric Foner, Philip Green, Lani Guinier, Tom Hayden, Tony Kushner, Elinor Langer, Deborah W. Meier, Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, Victor Navasky, Pedro Antonio Noguera, Richard Parker, Michael Pertschuk, Elizabeth Pochoda, Marcus G. Raskin, Kristina Rizga, Andrea Batista Schlesinger, David Weir, Roger Wilkins

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, SPECIAL PROJECTS/WEBSITE: Peter Rothberg
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, DEVELOPMENT/ASSOCIATES: Peggy Randall
VICE PRESIDENT, ADVERTISING: Ellen Bollinger
ADVERTISING MANAGER: Amanda Hale
VICE PRESIDENT, CIRCULATION: Arthur Stupar
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Michelle O'Keefe
CIRCULATION FULFILLMENT MANAGER: Miriam Camp
PRODUCTION DIRECTOR: Omar Rubio
TYPOGRAPHER/WEB PRODUCER: Sandy McCroskey
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Timothy Don
NATION ASSOCIATES MANAGER: Jolange Wright
PUBLICITY AND SYNDICATION DIRECTOR: Ben Wyskida
EDUCATION/COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR: Habiba Alcindor
TECHNOLOGY MANAGER: Amiri K. Barksdale
ONLINE DIRECTOR: Jeff Larson
WEB PRODUCERS: Kellye Rogers, Melisa St. Prix
CONTROLLER: Mary van Valkenburg
ASSISTANT TO VICTOR NAVASKY: Mary Taylor Schilling
DATA ENTRY/MAIL COORDINATOR: John Holtz
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT: Kathleen Thomas
RECEPTIONIST/BUSINESS ASSISTANT: Elizabeth Berniak
ADVERTISING ASSISTANT: Kit Gross
CLERK: Shavonne Frazier
ACADEMIC LIAISON: Charles Bittner

PUBLISHER EMERITUS: Victor Navasky

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: E-mail to letters@thenation.com (300-word limit). Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

SUBMISSIONS: Queries only, no manuscripts. Go to www.thenation.com and click on "about," then "submissions" for a query form. Queries may be mailed to The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. SASE for poems.

INTERNET: Selections from the current issue become available Thursday night at www.thenation.com.

Printed on 100% recycled 40% post-consumer acid- and chlorine-free paper, in the USA.

This week at TheNation.com

News & Analysis

Katha Pollitt: Antichoice terrorism
Leslie Savan: Bill O'Reilly's role
Robert Dreyfuss: Obama's Cairo speech
William Greider: Phony credit card reform

Archive: Remembering Tiananmen
SlideShow: Blockbuster movies
Nation Poll: What use is Twitter?
VideoNation: Katrina vanden Heuvel on Obama and the Muslim world

Greater fuel efficiency and a transition to new green technologies are clearly in order. This doesn't just mean building smaller cars or even electric ones. Detroit could be manufacturing city buses, wind turbines, light rail, high-speed trains and solar panels. Such a shift would require an infusion of resources and ingenuity—and abandoning the free-market fanaticism that is still pervasive—but it is not unprecedented. In the 1940s, thanks in large part to the leadership of President Roosevelt and the United Auto Workers' Walter Reuther, idle car factories began building fighter planes for World War II, thereby simultaneously aiding the fight against fascism and helping to pull the country out of the Great Depression.

But today, for a variety of reasons, such leadership is lacking. The Obama administration certainly isn't providing it. And the voice of the UAW has become difficult to distinguish from that of industry management. Part of the problem is simply that the union has been hemorrhaging members as US manufacturing jobs evaporate. The fact that the union has swallowed concession after concession and still seen jobs disappear has led to profound demoralization among the rank and file. Today the union's membership is less than a third of what it was just thirty years ago, and its future is more uncertain than ever. As GM and Chrysler shed workers and plants, the nonunion firms and auto parts suppliers that largely dictate labor standards in the industry will wield even greater influence. And the Obama administration's plan for the industry, exacting painful concessions from the union on jobs and pay, only reinforces this downward-trending logic.

The challenge facing the UAW is to look beyond the financial health of the GM and Chrysler brands and steer an innovative course toward preserving well-paid manufacturing jobs and promoting environmental sustainability. But even if it crafts such a visionary message, in order to get a hearing for it the union must regain the leverage it has lost by organizing the unorganized, much as it did at its birth in the 1930s. Back then, the UAW's model of social movement unionism put it at the vanguard of progressive politics, and it used its clout in Detroit and Washington to pull up wages for workers in all industries, building a broad middle class. It won't be easy to get to that place again. Yet today there are fleets of nonunion workers—in newer Toyota and Honda plants in states like Kentucky and Alabama; at small independent parts makers that dot the industrial Midwest; and even in thousands of car dealerships in towns and cities across the country—who could be the key to the union's resurgence.

GOP fantasies aside, the Obama administration is not conducting its auto industry policy with the interests of organized labor in mind. The Wall Street brain trust that ran the president's auto task force spent months deliberating over the fate of the automakers in near isolation from workers, Congress and the people, and arrived at a solution notable for its timidity and callousness in the face of economic calamity. The lesson, for the UAW and for progressives, is clear. If there is to be another course for the domestic auto industry—and there must—it will have to be charted outside the Beltway by concerned citizens and emboldened workers ready to say, "What's good for us is what's good for GM," and not the other way around.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Noted.

CHANGE COMES TO KUWAIT: As six years of turmoil in Iraq have clearly demonstrated, the transition to democracy in the Persian Gulf can be painfully slow. The **United Arab Emirates**, home to the Gulf's financial capital, Dubai, limits women's suffrage to a few hundred state-nominated electors, while US ally **Saudi Arabia** still denies women the right to vote. Until four years ago the same was true of Kuwait, where men have had the right to vote since shortly after the nation was granted independence from Britain nearly half a century ago.

Universal suffrage came to Kuwait in 2005, and after three contests in which no women were elected, four were voted into the Gulf's oldest elected parliament on May 17. **Massouma al-Mubarak**, who had previously been appointed Kuwait's first female cabinet member, and **Salwa al-Jassar** and **Aseel al-Awadhi**, both university lecturers, join women's rights activist **Rola Dashti** in the fifty-member National Assembly. All four hold doctorates from US universities, and two, Awadhi and Dashti, do not wear Islamic headscarves.

The election results included a further bit of good news for the million women who live in Kuwait: the Islamic fundamentalist bloc, which opposes women's suffrage and right to run for office, saw its share of seats in parliament decrease. Indeed, the day after the voting Secretary of State **Hillary Clinton**, in her commencement address at Barnard College, described the historic elections as "a major step forward for Kuwait, the region and, I would argue, the world." CORBIN HIAR

ELON'S ÉLAN: The world of letters lost an inimitable voice on May 25, when journalist and historian **Amos Elon** died in Italy, at 82. For decades, Elon's stylish essays graced the pages of *The New York Review of Books*, where he wrote about a wide range of subjects, most notably Israel/Palestine, to which his Viennese parents fled in 1933, when he was a child. Elon went on to become the leading journalist of his generation, the Washington correspondent for *Ha'aretz* and the author of numerous acclaimed books, including the superb *The Israelis: Founders and Sons*. Yet he grew increasingly estranged from Israel in the decades after the 1967 Six-Day War, bitterly disappointed by his country's rightward turn toward religiosity, militarism and jingoistic nationalism.

Elon eventually packed up his belongings and moved to Tuscany in 2004. He expressed some of this bitterness (along with a sense of battle fatigue) in an interview that year with *Ha'aretz*'s columnist **Ari Shavit**. "Nothing has changed here in the last 40 years," he complained. "The problems are exactly the same as they always were. The solutions were already known back then. But no one paid attention to them."

And yet, into his 80s, Elon continued to write about those problems with a depth and seriousness that was rarely matched by less critical (and less informed) observers. His voice will be missed. His work and the high standard he set remain to be appreciated and emulated. EYAL PRESS

EARLE'S LABOR OF LOVE: When **Steve Earle** decided to put together an album of songs by his late friend and mentor, Texas singer-songwriter **Townes Van Zandt**, he grabbed the legacy by the horns and did the hard stuff at the beginning. The first song he recorded was "Pancho and Lefty," the elegiac masterpiece that Van Zandt had handed to **Willie Nelson** and **Merle Haggard** in 1983. They sang the thing like the last two seraphs left standing in the roadhouse and rode it all the way to No. 1 on country charts.

"I recorded 'Pancho and Lefty' first," Earle says, "which was sort of like that first day in jail and you go out in the yard and you find the biggest motherfucker out there and knock him out. And then you get to keep your radio."

In his case, Earle is entitled to both the metaphor and the material. He burst onto the scene with *Guitar Town*, his precocious 1986 debut, which propelled him to the front rank of young country artists. But country couldn't hold him entirely. *Copperhead Road* was an explosive piece of rock that also featured some traditional Irish instruments in surprising places. At the same time, Earle spiraled into addiction. There were very few drugs he didn't do in excess. He was busted repeatedly and wound up in prison in 1994.

Since then, Earle has cleaned himself up and made a new career out of gloriously eclectic music, including some of the most exciting political music of his time. He's written tough, knowing songs against the death penalty and the war in Iraq. He wrote "John Walker's Blues," about **John Walker Lindh** (the "American Taliban"), and caught all kinds of hell from the right because of it. *Washington Square Serenade*, for which he won a Grammy last year, was a celebration of New York's immigrant cultures, released just as the anti-immigrant wave hit high tide.

Earle's best work is in the kind of narrative songwriting he learned from hanging around a circle of young songwriters, the leader of whom was Townes Van Zandt, a sad, sweet-voiced genius with a self-destructive streak that made Earle's look tame. It was with Van Zandt that Earle honed his gift for dealing with big issues through the small stories—a civilian truck driver in Baghdad ("Home to Houston"), a prison guard on death row ("Ellis Unit One") or a grunt in a backwater Confederate Army patrol ("Ben McCulloch"). In his life Earle managed to pull out of the morass into which his mentor would disappear; Van Zandt died of similarly accumulated excesses on January 1, 1997.

The music on *Townes* is simple and literally homespun: Earle recorded most of it in his New York apartment. He does a fine job on "Pancho and Lefty," but his best work is on the lesser-known pieces from Van Zandt's vast catalog. It's in the cold honesty of "Rake" that Earle comes closest to telling Van Zandt's story in the writer's own voice, as though Van Zandt were a character in the song. There is sinew to the music and blood in the words when Earle sings:

"I covered my lovers with flowers and wounds/My laughter the devil would frighten/The sun she would come and beat me back down/But every cruel day had its nightfall/I'd welcome the stars with wine and guitars/Full of fire and forgetful."

"I don't know why Townes did what he did," Earle muses. "I don't know why he didn't think enough of himself to overcome it. I did.... There's some survivor guilt involved in every second of this record." And there is love there, too, pure and unlabored.

CHARLES P. PIERCE

A longer version of this piece can be found at thenation.com/doc/20090608/pierce.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Culture War Casualty

COMMENT

In the summer of 1993, a housewife from Grants Pass, Oregon, named Rachelle "Shelley" Ranae Shannon traveled to Wichita, Kansas, with a Bible and a .25-caliber pistol and shot George Tiller, a 51-year-old doctor and abortion provider. Dr. Tiller was not the first physician so targeted—six months earlier, an abortion provider named David Gunn had been murdered outside his medical clinic in Pensacola, Florida. Despite sustaining wounds in both arms, Tiller managed to survive the attack. Sixteen years later, on May 31, while standing in the foyer of his church, where he was serving as an usher and distributing bulletins, Tiller was shot again. This time he wasn't so lucky.

The election of Barack Obama, it was said, would put the culture wars behind us, and on May 17 in a commencement address at Notre Dame University, President Obama tried to inject a note of civility into the debate about abortion. In his speech Obama urged opponents and supporters of abortion rights to seek common ground by working to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies. He also told the story of an e-mail he'd received from a doctor who had voted for him in the Illinois primary but who'd taken offense at a passage on Obama's website describing "right-wing ideologues who want to take away a woman's right to choose." The doctor characterized himself as prolife and wrote, "I do not ask at this point that you oppose abortion, only that you speak about this issue in fair-minded words."

Obama wrote back to thank him and directed his staff to alter the wording, which in its original form was positively gracious next to the language on StopObamaNotreDame.com. This website features writings and video clips of Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry, who showed up at Notre Dame to protest and who compared Obama to Herod. "Obama wants open ended child-killing," declared Terry on the website, promising to "raze hell" in the "'war'" to come. After the murder of Dr. Tiller, Terry came forward with more inflammatory words, calling Tiller "a mass murderer" and adding, "Those men and women who slaughter the unborn are murderers according to the Law of God. We must continue to expose them."

It is too early to say whether the murder of Dr. Tiller will trigger a wave of violent terrorism targeting abortion providers similar to the one that took place during the mid-1990s. But it is not too early to be struck by the parallels. Then, as now, the violence came not in a moment of triumph for antiabortion activists but in the face of isolation and defeat. The year that Shelley Shannon shot Dr. Tiller was the year Bill Clinton assumed office. It was the year after the Supreme Court ruled, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, that the central holding of *Roe v. Wade* "should be affirmed." It was the year that a small band of militant antiabortion activists began openly endorsing murder and that a blueprint for violence and sabotage called the *Army of God Manual* declared, "All of the options have expired. Our Most Dread Sovereign Lord God requires that whosoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

Scott Roeder, the man accused of murdering George Tiller, was an unstable drifter who found a home on the extremist right, joining a militia group that refused to pay taxes and allegedly posting comments on antiabortion websites likening Dr. Tiller to the infamous Nazi Josef Mengele. The government seems aware that the current political climate could lead others to embark on similar journeys to the fringes of the paranoid right. In April, the Department of Homeland Security released a report on right-wing extremism that drew attention to the danger. The report was promptly dismissed by conservatives, who claimed it exaggerated the threat. In retrospect, though, it arguably understated the hazards facing abortion clinics and providers, who were scarcely mentioned despite being subjected to arson, bombing and forms of violence on a scale no other group has faced in recent decades.

After Dr. Tiller's murder Obama expressed shock and outrage and offered US Marshal protection to other facilities and people who feel endangered. He ought to follow that up by reinvigorating the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, which was passed in 1994 to make violence aimed at abortion providers a federal crime but lacked strong direction during the Bush era.

"Fair-minded words" is what Barack Obama called for at Notre Dame. Yet his election has brought coarsened rhetoric from the right on more than just the abortion front. Sonia Sotomayor, the Puerto Rican woman Obama recently nominated to replace David Souter on the Supreme Court, has been denounced as a "racist" and compared to David Duke by Newt Gingrich and Rush Limbaugh, respectively. "Terrorist!" and "Kill him!" were among the shouts against Obama heard at right-wing rallies during last year's presidential campaign. Bullets kill. Inflammatory words merely incite. But those who deploy hateful language can hardly profess shock when their words are taken seriously, particularly over emotionally fraught issues that have sparked violence. Before he was murdered,

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

Sonia Sotomayor

The nominee's Sotomayor,
Whom all good Latinos adore
But right-wingers tend to deplore.
They'd like to show Sonia the door.
Her record, they say, heretofore
Reveals that beliefs at her core
Would favor minorities more:
She'd hand them decisions galore,
Because of the racial rapport.

Whereas white male judges are, as everyone knows,
totally neutral.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

George Tiller was a popular topic on Fox's *O'Reilly Factor*—the host referred to him as "Tiller the Baby Killer," a man guilty of "Nazi stuff." These are not innocent words, as doctors targeted by antiabortion protesters have pointed out in the past. In a letter to his hometown newspaper some years ago, one such physician wrote:

> The members of the local non-violent, pro-life community may continue to picket my home. They may continue to scream that I am a murderer and a killer when I enter the clinics at which they 'peacefully' exercise their First Amendment Right of freedom of speech. They may do all of the above to me and other abortion providers of this community. But please don't feign surprise, dismay and certainly not innocence when a more volatile and less restrained member of the group decides to react to their inflammatory rhetoric by shooting an abortion provider.

This letter appeared in the *Buffalo News* in 1994, one year after Shelley Shannon shot George Tiller. Its author, Barnett Slepian, an Ob-Gyn and abortion provider, was murdered four years later while standing in the kitchen of his home. He was the last abortion provider to be gunned down in America, until George Tiller. EYAL PRESS

Eyal Press, a Nation *contributing writer, is the author of* Absolute Convictions: My Father, a City, and the Conflict That Divided America.

The CIA's Truth Problem

The United States has been trying to run a secret intelligence service in an open democracy for sixty years. It depends on trust between politicians and spies, two professions known to wrestle with truth. Trust has been broken time and again.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's recent charge that the CIA lied to her about the torture of suspected terrorists under President George W. Bush has started a whirlwind of spin. The big lie—President Bush said the United States didn't torture, though we did—has been lost in the maelstrom. So has a harsh truth: yes, the CIA has stonewalled and deceived Congress in the past, but Congress is stone deaf and derelict in overseeing the CIA.

COMMENT

Pelosi's old Congressional colleague Leon Panetta, who runs the CIA, wants to set things right. "There's been a lot of poison in the well," Panetta said on May 18, and "it hurts this country" when "Congress and the CIA don't feel like they're partners." He said he would commune with his Congressional overseers, hash things out in private, talk with them "in a way in which we can be honest with one another."

Good luck, Leon. Others have gone before you.

Like it or not, the United States needs trustworthy intelligence. But spying is a dirty and dangerous business. The CIA depends on officers who know how to lie, cheat and steal—"to use deception, to use manipulation, to use, frankly, dishonesty," in the words of former CIA general counsel Jeffrey Smith. But when things go wrong overseas—as they often do—the CIA is called to account in Washington from time to time. That's where things really go wrong.

The CIA is "an organization that thrives on deception," says John Hamre, former deputy secretary of defense. "How do you manage an organization like that?" Congress hasn't had the will or the wherewithal to do it.

Congress created the CIA in 1947, and for a generation most of its members did as Senator John Stennis advised: "Make up your mind that you are going to have an intelligence agency and protect it as such, and shut your eyes some, and take what is coming." Then a newly anointed president, Gerald Ford, let slip that the CIA had run lethal plots against foreign leaders, which would tarnish every president since Harry Truman.

Ford looked back in some anguish on this; he had been a Congressman when called to serve on the Warren Commission, which looked into the assassination of President Kennedy. Late in life he reflected on the CIA's keeping secrets from the commission—notably its plots against Fidel Castro. It was "unconscionable" that the CIA was "not giving us the full story," Ford said.

But when he was in the White House, Ford feared that the truth about the past would destroy the CIA and damage the United States. That same kind of fear is drowning out calls for a truth commission on the conduct of the "war on terror."

"The question is how to plan to meet the investigation of the CIA," Ford mused at a White House meeting in February 1975. His chief of staff, Donald Rumsfeld, called for "a damage-limiting operation" to save the secrets from spilling in Congress. The man Ford chose to run the CIA—George H.W. Bush—tried his best. But no one protected former CIA director Richard Helms. He drew a two-year suspended sentence in 1977 on a federal charge of deceiving Congress about his orders from President Nixon to overthrow the government of Chile.

Helms had an obligation to testify truthfully, but he thought he had a higher oath to keep secrets. America's political history turned on which oath mattered more. For the past thirty years, Congress has fought for the right to oversee the CIA. It has failed to fulfill its responsibilities.

Before President Reagan took office, in 1981, Congress created intelligence oversight committees in the Senate and the House. Reagan's CIA chief, William Casey, foiled them for six years. "Casey was guilty of contempt of Congress from the day he was sworn in," said Robert Gates, Casey's number-two man, now defense secretary. Casey obfuscated gleefully before the intelligence committees; his senior officers testified evasively. Among the consequences was the Iran/Contra affair, which blew up in late 1986. The spectacle of the United States caught shipping weapons to Iran, skimming the profits and slipping the money to anticommunists in Central America came close to wrecking Reagan's presidency.

From 1986 to '94, the CIA sent ninety-five highly classified reports on Moscow's military strength to the White House. Senior CIA officials knew some of the data were manipulated by Moscow and designed to deceive the United States. They

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

decided it didn't matter. The discovery of this deception in 1995 was "incredible" and "shocking," said Fred Hitz, then the CIA's inspector general. "What came out of this whole episode was a feeling that the agency couldn't be trusted." The CIA had broken "the sacred trust," said Hitz, "and without that, no espionage agency can do its job."

Starting in 1995, the CIA used the Peruvian air force to shoot down airplanes suspected of carrying cocaine. In April 2001, the operation attacked a plane carrying a family of Michigan missionaries over the Amazon. Veronica Bowers, 35, and her daughter, Charity, seven months old, were killed. CIA inspector general John Helgerson reported that CIA officers had violated presidential orders controlling the operation and hid their misdeeds from Congress, the Justice Department and the National Security Council.

Seven years after the shoot-down, Peter Hoekstra—the ranking Republican on the House Intelligence Committee, now running for governor of Michigan—published a few damning paragraphs from the report. He called it evidence that the CIA "operates outside the law and covers up what it does and lies to Congress." That's what Pelosi said about torture.

Now, on orders from President Obama to dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda, the CIA is killing suspected terrorists with remote-controlled missiles fired from drone aircraft above Pakistan and Afghanistan. The CIA decides if it has hit the right targets and whether civilian deaths are acceptable. Do we want to live in a world where the CIA's clandestine service has the authority to decide who lives and who dies? The idea that the CIA may be killing civilians, sparking an ever wider war, is too hot for Congress to handle.

Oversight is a word with two meanings—to oversee and to oversleep. So is *mislead*. It means to lie, and it means a lack of leadership. Congress has a responsibility to oversee the CIA that remains largely unfulfilled. It has to ask the right questions, demand full answers and report the facts annually to the American people.

Will the CIA tell Congress the truth? Would Congress listen if it did? If trust remains broken, intelligence will fail again. And when intelligence fails, soldiers and civilians die. TIM WEINER

Tim Weiner, a Pulitzer Prize–winning reporter, covered the CIA for the New York Times. *He is the author of* Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA, *which won the 2007 National Book Award for nonfiction.*

Naming the Enemy

Every spring National People's Action brings hundreds of community organizers and grassroots leaders from across the country to Washington for its annual conference. And every year the event culminates in a hotly anticipated and meticulously planned direct action. In 2004 organizers bused hundreds of people to Karl Rove's Georgetown home, where they demanded he use his power to push Congress to pass the DREAM Act, which would allow undocumented students to qualify for financial aid. George Goehl, who runs NPA, wasn't on staff at the time, but he describes the logic this way: "Rove was the most powerful person in the administration there was a way to get access to."

This year NPA opted to target someone you've almost certainly never heard of: Ed Yingling, president and CEO of the American Bankers Association. The ABA has been the chief obstacle to a proposed bankruptcy reform bill that would let judges modify mortgages, thereby allowing an estimated 600,000 people who face foreclosure to stay in their homes. The opposition from the banking lobby has been so fierce that the Senate's chief proponent of the bill, Dick Durbin, more or less gave up on negotiating with his colleagues across the aisle, opting instead to negotiate directly with representatives of the banks, as if they were some heretofore undiscovered fourth branch of government. (In April the bill went down to defeat, prompting Durbin to observe that the banks "frankly, own the place.")

"It was 600 people," says Goehl, describing the ABA action. "We had twelve or thirteen buses.... [We] went to the seventh floor where Ed Yingling is.... [And we said,] 'You guys have created the foreclosure crisis, sent the economy down the tubes and now you're preventing the number-one piece of legislation that would keep families in their home. You gotta back off.'"

This is Community Organizing 101: you figure out who's got the power; then you confront them. When the City of Chicago was failing to collect garbage properly in a poor neighborhood on the South Side, Saul Alinsky didn't have neighborhood residents protest the garbage men or the offices of Streets and Sanitation. He had residents collect their trash and dump it on the lawn of the local alderman. Services quickly improved.

It seems strange, almost surreal, to say this, but the Republican Party, and arguably the whole conservative movement, is not the left's biggest enemy at the moment. On keeping a public plan in healthcare reform; streamlining student lending; and passing the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), cap and trade, financial regulation and a host of other structural economic reforms progressives hope to enact, the GOP is more akin to the garbage men than the alderman.

"Most Republicans aren't waking up every day thinking, How do we kill banking regulation?" says Goehl. "Most people who listen to Rush Limbaugh aren't waking up thinking about how do we kill banking regulation. But the people with the deep pockets who have power in DC *are* thinking that.

"I sometimes get frustrated because it seems like the left isn't focused on corporate power. We like to talk about the Sarah Palins and Rush Limbaughs, and meanwhile the American Bankers Association is one of the main entities running the country."

And while most of us can name the latest moronic utterance from Limbaugh or Michael Steele or Newt Gingrich, the Ed Yinglings of the world remain comfortably anonymous.

"I watch people click," says a friend who works at a web publication. "If you put a story on Sarah Palin at the way, way, way bottom of the page and a piece on the ABA in a screaming

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

header on top, the Palin story would get more page views."

While the Republican Party shrinks, corporate interests are deftly molting their old K Street Project skin and crawling en masse inside the big tent being pitched by the Democratic Party. These same corporate interests have always had a purchase on Democrats, of course. But for much of the last decade, business interests had the luxury of spending most of their resources aiding their allies in the GOP.

No more. Writing on *The Atlantic*'s website, Scott Bland and Ronald Brownstein identify the emergence of what they dub "The Democratic Industrial Complex." Energy and healthcare companies, automakers and banks all understand that the Democrats control much of their fate, so they've cast their lot with the majority party in a big way: John Kerry got less than 20 percent of the donations from electric utilities; Barack Obama got almost 60 percent. So far in this cycle, Democrats have captured two-thirds of the donations from the healthcare industry.

If big business's old legislative strategy was centered on relentless opposition to progressive initiatives—an approach that continues in areas like EFCA—the new strategy is to subvert legislation through co-optation, as in healthcare and cap and trade. By converting themselves, ostensibly, from opponents to "partners," corporate lobbies are trying to have it both ways: to block reforms while changing overt power struggles over the future of the economy into seemingly cooperative negotiations. At these negotiations, to use the president's favorite phrase, "everyone has a seat at the table"—except, the lobbyists get by far the best seats. (Alinsky didn't have much patience for this approach. "This liberal cliché about reconciliation of opposing forces is a load of crap," he once said. "When one side gets enough power, then the other side gets reconciled to it.")

These efforts at co-optation are aided by our natural inclination toward narrative and fable. It is pretty irresistible to view politics through the lens of heroes and villains. Palin is a character; the ABA is just an acronym.

But Goehl says the challenge for his organization and others (indeed, for members of the progressive media such as myself) is to make Ed Yingling and those of his ilk into household names. "We're interested in, how do we lift up a few of these key actors and turn them into public names for what they've done to lead us down this road. I don't think it's going to be easy. But it's happened a bit with the Bank of America guy."

"Ken Lewis?" I say.

"Yeah," Goehl replies, laughing. "I totally lost his name, and here I'm supposed to have a different orientation."

CHRISTOPHER HAYES

The Age of Paine

America was not called into being by plantation owners or generals. It was Tom Paine, ink-stained wretch and citizen of the world, who first roused patriots with his unapologetic declaration that "the sun never shined on a cause of greater worth" than the revolt of thirteen small colonies against the mighty British Empire. None of the American revolutionaries—not Washington, not Jefferson, not Madison and surely not the cautious John Adams—understood as well what was at stake. This was no tea party, counseled Paine, who died 200 years ago on June 8, 1809. This was the fight "to begin the world over again." With pamphlets that forged the intellectual and emotional framework for a glorious treason—*Common Sense* and the *American Crisis* series—Paine inspired open revolt against monarchy, imperialism and the churchmen who defended these corruptions. But even this was insufficient rebellion. The pamphleteer's demand that the new nation fulfill the promises of the Enlightenment led Adams to fear that his time might become "the Age of Paine." The second president needn't have worried. The age of Paine would be delayed for the better part of two centuries.

Today it seems reasonable that the great "Farmer of thoughts" has become the founder of choice for Americans who dare to demand that this be a just Republic. Paine condemned slavery, argued for the rights of women and imagined social democracy. When most of the world accepted the divine right of kings, he objected to organized religion and championed freethinking with such fervency that even his fellow revolutionaries abandoned their tribune. Paine's determination to "hold up truth to your eyes" did not endear him to comrades who had turned "respectable" or to the heirs of that respectability. Nearly a century after the truest patriot died without much honor in New York City, he was derided by Teddy Roosevelt as a "filthy little atheist."

If TR did not approve of Paine, though, another young president does. Barack Obama is weaving the pamphleteer into the fabric of America's twenty-first century. On the eve of his inauguration, Obama declared his hope that "the dream of our founders will live on in our time." But which of the founders would be worthy of quotation in the inaugural address, to be heard by all the world as an affirmation of that dream's highest values? A slaveholder president? A drafter of the Constitution, which compromised the ideal that all men are created equal? No, Obama turned to the outlier who recognized not only what America was at its founding but what it might be. Speaking of a "return to these truths" of the American experiment, the new president invoked Paine as an inspiration for our times: "Let it be told to the future world that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive, that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet…it." Obama quotes Paine frequently, recognizing—implicitly if not yet explicitly, as some of us hope he will—that no founder anticipated his presidency or the true meaning of the word "change" as well as the itinerant rebel who promised that "America ever is what she thinks herself to be."

JOHN NICHOLS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eric Alterman

The Smearing of I.F. Stone, Continued

Spy controversies are all but impossible for the press to cover or the public to understand. Multiple levels of deception are frequently impenetrable and, for the uninitiated, inexplicable. Even historians who specialize in the trade are fooled by manufactured evidence, phony cover stories, witnesses with hidden agendas. It is therefore incumbent on anyone who wades into the controversies to be not only skeptical about swirling charges but also modest about conclusions reached.

Ever since I.F. Stone died in 1989, we have seen a parade of decidedly immodest individuals—including, so far, Robert Novak, Ann Coulter, Herbert Romerstein, David Horowitz, Martin Peretz, Ronald Radosh, Paul Berman and Max Holland—who have sought to accuse America's most prominent independent journalist of being a Soviet intelligence agent, always on the basis of speculation, deliberate misinterpretation or pure invention. The newest episode began when John Haynes, Harvey Klehr and Alexander Vassiliev published an excerpt from their book *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* in the May issue of *Commentary* under the sensational headline I.F. Stone, Soviet Agent—Case Closed. But as detailed examinations of their evidence by D.D. Guttenplan in *The Nation*, Todd Gitlin in *The American Prospect* and Myra MacPherson on the Huffington Post have since demonstrated, the case against Stone is not merely not "closed"; it was barely ever opened.

Stone made a great many mistakes during his sixty years in the business, none more serious than his colossal misjudgment of the nature and character of Stalin's Soviet Union. But as alleged spy files go, this one is thinner than Paris Hilton. In the first place, only one person—a down-on-his-luck former KGB agent eager to sell his note-taking services—can even claim to have seen the documents upon which the charges are based, since they remain locked up in KGB vaults.

Second, even if all of the accusations the authors level at Stone are true, they do not come close to justifying an accusation of espionage. Stone enjoyed no access to the upper echelons of the US government and none whatsoever to classified information. He received no payments from Soviet intelligence for anything. What he did do was meet with Soviet agents working under cover in the 1930s and '40s and exchange information with them. Yet given the nature of the stories he was covering, it would have been impossible for him not to do so. And the authors never establish that Stone knew he was talking to intelligence agents. By these standards, almost every journalist who reports on foreign affairs and consults with government officials and foreign journalists who may or may not be employed by intelligence services is engaging in espionage.

If Stone was a spy (or "agent," as some of the slightly less careless accusers put it), so am I. In fact, I'm not only a Russian agent but also a Chinese agent, an Israeli agent, a Dutch agent, a French agent, a British agent—even a Tunisian and Jamaican agent. As Klehr admitted to Paul Bass of the *New Haven Independent*, "There's no indication with Stone that he's providing hot information." He also noted, "He's just another one of the sources they recruited." And don't forget we are talking about a period of history when liberals and leftists were quite properly in a panic about the West's refusal to take seriously the threat posed by Hitler, and many in mainstream society looked to the Soviets as a bulwark against fascism—at least until the Nazi-Soviet Pact. (Stone, according to these documents, cut off communications with the Russians after the 1939 treaty.)

What's really going on here is that enemies of Stone in particular and the left in general are portraying the normal activities of an energetic Popular Front journalist as somehow akin to spying. "Here is this icon of incorruptibility, integrity, independence," Klehr told Bass. Many of the documents that allegedly indict Stone can be used to level almost identical charges against that paragon of the Washington establishment, Walter Lippmann, who according to the Soviets proved a more fruitful source. But, strangely, we don't see the headline Walter Lippmann, Soviet Agent—Case Closed.

Armed with generous funding from the ultra-right-wing Smith-Richardson Foundation, Haynes and Klehr publicized their ludicrous claims that Stone was a "Soviet spy" who "worked closely with the KGB," at a conference co-sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars and by the Cold War International History Project. Panels at this event included none of Stone's biographers or any historians on record as unsympathetic to their thesis, despite numerous entreaties to the organizers to fix this imbalance. Panelists leveled wild and unsupportable allegations about Stone, but when Guttenplan, in particular, sought to rise from the audience to dispel some of the distortions he had heard from the panelists, he was summarily cut off by the moderator. (Long after the relevant panel ended, Guttenplan was given a few minutes to state his objections.)

The campaign to smear Stone bears the hallmarks of a foundation-funded campaign of right-wing media manipulation. The pages from *Spies* about Stone were excerpted in *Commentary*, a right-wing journal that has specialized in McCarthy-style attacks on honest liberals and leftists for more than thirty years. Within seconds of its posting on the Internet, it was trumpeted by Matt Drudge. Right-wing bloggers picked it up and without examining the evidence or, in many cases, even bothering to read the article, amplified its false conclusions. This is how modern-day McCarthyism works in an era when Matt Drudge is our authority on what constitutes news: an honest man's reputation is posthumously soiled while the truth is still tying its shoes. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IRAQ'S NEW DEATH SQUAD

America has built an elite and lethal counterterrorism force. But who's calling the shots?

by SHANE BAUER

The light is fading from the dusty Baghdad sky as Hassan Mahsan re-enacts what happened to his family last summer. We're standing in the courtyard of his concrete-block house, his children are watching us quietly and his wife is twirling large circles of dough and slapping them against the inside walls of a roaring oven. He walks over to his three-foot-tall daughter and grabs her head like a melon. As she stands there, he gestures wildly behind her, pretending to tie up her hands, then pretending to point a rifle at her head. "They took the blindfold off me, pointed the gun at her head and cocked it, saying, 'Either you tell us where al-Zaydawi is, or we kill your daughter.'"

"They just marched into our house and took whatever they wanted," Hassan's mother says, peeking out the kitchen door. "I've never seen anyone act like this."

As Hassan tells it, it was a quiet night on June 10, 2008, in Sadr City, Baghdad's poor Shiite district of more than 2 million people, when the helicopter appeared over his house and the front door exploded, nearly burning his sleeping youngest son. Before Hassan knew it, he was on the ground, hands bound and a bag over his head, with eight men pointing rifles at him, locked and loaded.

At first he couldn't tell whether the men were Iraqis or Americans. He says he identified himself as a police sergeant, offering his ID before they took his pistol and knocked him to the ground. The men didn't move like any Iraqi forces he'd ever seen. They looked and spoke like his countrymen, but they were wearing American-style uniforms and carrying American weapons with night-vision scopes. They accused him of being a commander in the local militia, the Mahdi Army, before they dragged him off, telling his wife he was "finished." But before they left, they identified themselves. "We are the Special Forces. The dirty brigade," Hassan recalls them saying.

The Iraq Special Operations Forces (ISOF) is probably the largest special forces outfit ever built by the United States, and it is free of many of the controls that most governments employ to rein in such lethal forces. The project started in the deserts of Jordan just after the Americans took Baghdad in April 2003. There, the US Army's Special Forces, or Green Berets, trained mostly 18-year-old Iraqis with no prior military experience. The resulting brigade was a Green Beret's dream come true: a deadly, elite, covert unit, fully fitted with American equipment, that would operate for years under US command and be unaccountable to Iraqi ministries and the normal political process.

According to Congressional records, the ISOF has grown into nine battalions, which extend to four regional "commando bases" across Iraq. By December, each will be complete with its own "intelligence infusion cell," which will operate independently of Iraq's other intelligence networks. The ISOF is at least 4,564 operatives strong, making it approximately the size of the US Army's own Special Forces in Iraq. Congressional records indicate that there are plans to double the ISOF over the next "several years."

According to retired Lt. Col. Roger Carstens, US Special Forces are "building the most powerful force in the region." In 2008 Carstens, then a senior fellow at the Center for a New

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOBODY OWNS THE NATION.

Not GE. Not Disney. Not Murdoch or Time Warner.
We are a wholly owned subsidiary of our own conscience.

This independence is why great writers have always used *The Nation* as an Early Warning System—to expose before it's too late the frauds, felonies and follies of the all–too–private enterprise we call Our Government.

And it's why week in, week out we're read by an audience as illustrious as our authors.

If you believe, as our readers do, that the highest form of patriotism is demanding to know exactly what Government's doing in your name, why not sign on today at this very low rate? You can save a lot—not least of which could be your country.

THAT'S WHY SO MANY SOMEBODIES READ IT.

Russell Simmons is a longstanding* Nation *reader.

SUBSCRIBE NOW
WWW.THENATION.COM/TRIAL-RATE
800-333-8536

(Legally speaking, of course, everything has an owner, but as a Nation editor once wrote, "it is one of the superb facts about *The Nation* that you can no more 'own' it than you can own the spirit it represents.")

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American Security, was an adviser to the Iraqi National Counter-Terror Force, where he helped set up the Iraqi counterterrorism laws that govern the ISOF.

"All these guys want to do is go out and kill bad guys all day," he says, laughing. "These guys are shit hot. They are just as good as we are. We trained 'em. They are just like us. They use the same weapons. They walk like Americans."

When the US Special Forces began the slow transfer of the ISOF to Iraqi control in April 2007, they didn't put it under the command of the Defense Ministry or the Interior Ministry, bodies that normally control similar special forces the world over. Instead, the Americans pressured the Iraqi government to create a new minister-level office called the Counter-Terrorism Bureau. Established by a directive from Iraq's prime minister, Nuri al-Maliki, the CTB answers directly to him and commands the ISOF independently of the police and army. According to Maliki's directive, the Iraqi Parliament has no influence over the ISOF and knows little about its mission. US Special Forces operatives like Carstens have largely overseen the bureau. Carstens says this independent chain of command "might be the perfect structure" for counterterrorism worldwide.

Although the force is officially controlled by the Iraqi government, popular perception in Baghdad is that the ISOF—the dirty brigade—is a covert, all-Iraqi branch of the US military. That reading isn't far from the truth. The US Special Forces are still closely involved with every level of the ISOF, from planning and carrying out missions to deciding tactics and creating policy. According to Brig. Gen. Simeon Trombitas, commander of the Iraq National Counter-Terror Force Transition Team, part of the multinational command responsible for turning control of the ISOF over to the Iraqi government, the US Special Forces continue to "have advisers at every level of the chain of command."

In January 2008 the US Special Forces started allowing ISOF commanders to join missions with them and the ISOF rank and file. Starting last summer—when Hassan's family was attacked—ISOF battalions began launching missions on their own, without American advisers, in Sadr City, where political agreements forbid the Americans from entering. Accusations of human rights abuses, killings and politically motivated arrests have surfaced, including assaults on a university president and arrests of opposition politicians.

The US government has been focused on turning out "as many men in arms as possible, as quickly as possible," says Peter Harling, senior Middle East analyst at the International Crisis Group. "There has been very little impetus to build checks and controls to prevent abuse. It's been very much about building up capability without the oversight that could prevent some of the units [from] turning into proxies working for some politician."

In Sadr City opposition to the Iraqi government and the US occupation is strong. There is no longer any visible militia presence, but pictures of anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr still stick to the US-built concrete walls that enclose the city, and calls to prayer end with a demand for the hastened exit of "the enemy." There, the ISOF uses a policy of collective punishment, aimed at intimidating civilians, charges Hassan al-Rubaie, Sadrist member of the parliamentary Security and Defense Committee. "They terrorize entire neighborhoods just to arrest one person they think is a terrorist," he says. "This needs to stop."

US Special Forces advisers have done little to respond to allegations of abuse. Civilian pleas, public protests, complaints by Iraqi Army commanders about the ISOF's actions and calls for disbanding it by members of Parliament have not pushed the US government to take a hard look at the force they are creating. Instead, US advisers dismiss such claims as politically motivated. "The enemy is trying to discredit them," says Carstens. "It's not because they are doing anything dirty."

On the same night Hassan Mahsan's house was raided, 26-year-old Haidar al-Aibi was killed with a bullet to the fore-

> 'All these guys want to do is go out and kill bad guys all day. These guys are shit hot.'
> —Lt. Col. Roger Carstens

head. His family says there was no warning. They tell me how it happened as we drink tea on the floor of their living room, furnished only with thick foam cushions and mournful depictions of the Shiite martyr Hussein. A woman weeps loudly in the corner, the sleeping child of her dead son almost obscured by the folds of her black garments.

Fathil al-Aibi says the family was awakened around midnight by a nearby explosion. His brother Haidar ran up to the roof to see what had happened and was immediately shot from a nearby rooftop. When Fathil, his brother Hussein and his father, Abbas, tried to bring Haidar downstairs, they were shot at, too. For about two hours he lay lifeless on the roof while his family panicked as red laser beams from rifle scopes danced on their windows. "We had tests the next day at the university," Hussein says. "We didn't think he would go like this."

Down the road, around the same time that night, police commando Ahmed Shibli says he was also being fired on. He illuminates two bullet holes in his house with a kerosene lamp as we talk. The men who busted open his front door called themselves the dirty brigade, he says, and they were carrying American weapons, not the AK-47s or PKCs the National Police use. When they entered, they fired immediately. "It wasn't a warning shot. They shot at me like they wanted to kill me as I was getting down on the ground. It was like we were first-degree terrorists." They fired again, he says, fatally shooting his ailing 63-year-old father. As blood poured from the old man's hip, Ahmed says the men held a gun to his little boy's head and forced his wife to search

Shane Bauer is a freelance journalist and Arabic speaker living in the Middle East. Research support provided by the Investigative Fund of The Nation Institute, the Center for Investigative Reporting and New American Media.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the room for the police-issued weapon he had left at work.

Ahmed and his brother were hauled to the outskirts of the city, along with Hassan, where they were lined up with other men in the dark. Hassan insists on substantiating his story by showing me an official complaint issued by a local army commander named Mustafa Sabah Yunis, alleging that an "unknown armed squadron" entered the area and arrested him.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi Army was rushing in to respond to the gunfire, and according to Hussein al-Aibi, these soldiers were shot at as well. He tells me the army got Haidar off the roof and drove him to the hospital. On the way, Fathil says, the vehicle was stopped by a dirty brigade operative, who asked Iraqi Army Major Abu Rajdi where they were going. According to Fathil, Rajdi told the operative, "This is a college student who has nothing to do with anything, and you shot him recklessly." The operative responded by hitting Rajdi and saying, "Turn around and go back, or we'll shoot him and we'll shoot you too."

At Haidar's funeral, Fathil asked Rajdi to testify. "You are a representative of the government, and you saw it all happen," he told the major. "You saw that he didn't have a weapon in his hand." Fathil says the major declined. "This is the dirty brigade," he recalls Rajdi saying. "We are afraid of them. When we see them, we retreat. If I testify against them, I'll be killed the next day. They kill and no one will hold them accountable, because they belong to the Americans."

'We are surprised when the Special Forces enter. Bad things happen. Some people steal, and some abuse women.' —Lt. Col. Abdullah

Major Rajdi's fear and distrust of the ISOF are echoed by other members of the regular Iraqi Army. "Sometimes we are surprised when the Special Forces enter," says Lt. Colonel Yahya Rasoul Abdullah, commander of the Third Battalion of the Forty-second Brigade in Sadr City. "Bad things happen. Some people steal, and some abuse women. They don't know the people on the streets like us. They just go after their target. We have suffered from this problem."

Accounts of older ISOF operations I heard around Baghdad suggest that the Americans may have knowingly allowed violence against civilians. In Adhamiya, long the stronghold of the Sunni insurgency in Baghdad, two hospital employees described their 2006 run-in with the ISOF to me. According to both witnesses, a self-identified ISOF operative named "Captain Hussam" unloaded his machine gun in the Al Numan Hospital after seeing the body of his superior, who had died under the hospital's care. An American operative with a red beard stood by silently watching. According to one witness, the Iraqi operative demanded his commander's death certificate, threatening to "torture you, kill you and kill the people of Adhamiya" if they didn't comply. The witnesses said the eight operatives who entered the hospital were driving Humvees, vehicles that only the Americans and the ISOF use. The next day, Captain Hussam returned, a witness said, offering a box of bullets as an apology.

The effective head of the American ISOF project is General Trombitas of the Iraq National Counter-Terror Transition Team. A towering man with a gray mustache and a wrinkled brow, Trombitas spent nearly seven of his over thirty years in the military training special forces in Colombia, El Salvador and other countries. On February 23 he gave me a tour of Area IV, a joint American-Iraqi base near the Baghdad International Airport, where US Special Forces train the ISOF. As we walk away from the helicopter, he cracks a boyish smile. Though he's worked with special forces all over the world, he tells me the men we are about to meet are "the best."

Trombitas says he is "very proud of what was done in El Salvador" but avoids the fact that special forces trained there by the United States in the early 1980s were responsible for the formation of death squads that killed more than 50,000 civilians thought to be sympathetic with leftist guerrillas. Guatemala was a similar case. Some Guatemalan special forces that had been trained in anti-terrorism tactics by the United States during the mid-1960s subsequently became death squads that took part in the killing of around 140,000 people. In the early 1990s, US Special Forces trained and worked closely with an elite Colombian police unit strongly suspected of carrying out some of the murders attributed to Los Pepes, a death squad that became the backbone of the country's current paramilitary organization. (Trombitas served in El Salvador from 1989-90 and in Colombia from 2003-2005, after these incidents took place.)

"The standards get looser when the Americans aren't with [the local special forces], and they can eventually become death squads, which I believe actually happened in Colombia," says Mark Bowden, author of *Black Hawk Down* and *Killing Pablo*, a book about the hunt for Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar by CIA and US Special Forces. The tactics taught in each country are the same, Bowden says. "They teach the same kind of skills. They use the same equipment."

Trombitas told the official blog of the Defense Department that the training missions used in Latin America are "extremely transferable" to Iraq. Salvadoran Special Forces even helped train the ISOF, he tells me. "It's a world of coalitions," he says. "The longer we work together, the more alike we are. When we share our values and our experiences with other armies, we make them the same."

Trombitas guides me into a warehouse where ISOF operatives, most of them in black masks, have been preparing for our arrival. He walks me through a special display of their American equipment—machine guns, sniper rifles, state-of-the-art night-vision equipment and fluffy desert camo that makes soldiers look like teddy bears. He takes me up a catwalk overlooking a fake house stocked with cartoonish posters of big-breasted women pointing pistols, a couple of real men dressed as "terrorists" with kaffiyehs wrapped around their faces and a 10-year-old boy playing hostage.

As we stand in the observation area, the door explodes. After a minute of constant shooting, the operatives march out with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

© 2009 CREDO

CREDO™ mobile

more than a network.
a movement.

WHAT DOES YOUR CELL PHONE STAND FOR?

Well, if you're with AT&T, it stands for Bush-era policies. As a two-time maximum donor to the Bush/Cheney campaign, AT&T made its position clear. At CREDO Mobile, we stand for the exact opposite. Our members have generated $60 million in donations to nonprofits such as the ACLU and Amnesty International and lobbied to end the Iraq war. So make the switch to a phone company you can love. **credomobile.com/nowar or 866.474.5148**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the "terrorists," the boy and a poster of an '80s-style villain, wearing a jean jacket and holding a woman hostage. More than twenty bullet holes are centered on his forehead. "Look at that marksmanship," Trombitas says, smiling proudly.

Trombitas gets to the issue of human rights before I do. He assures me that US Special Forces take allegations of human rights abuses very seriously—two Iraqi men were let go for prisoner abuse since he took over in August last year, he says—but he won't comment on specific cases. I raise the issue of accountability and bring up one well-documented mission that caused waves in the Iraqi Parliament: in August the ISOF raided Diyala's provincial government compound, reportedly with the support of US Apache helicopters. They arrested a member of the Iraqi Islamic Party, Iraq's main Sunni Arab party. They also arrested the president of the university, also a Sunni, and killed a secretary and wounded four armed guards during the night.

I barely get the word "Diyala" out of my mouth before the American operatives standing around us start to grumble nervously and a translator jumps in. "For the reputation of the ISOF, please, let's cut that off," he says.

Abdul-Karim al-Samarrai, a member of the ruling United Iraqi Alliance and the parliamentary Security and Defense Committee, says that what happened in Diyala was one of many signs of the prime minister's bad intentions for the ISOF. "Politicians are afraid because this force can be used for political ends," he says. In response to outrage from members of Parliament over the arrest of politicians by the ISOF, Maliki, who is officially required to approve every ISOF target, denied any knowledge of the Diyala mission. His claim of innocence raises important questions. If the man who is supposed to be in charge of the ISOF has no knowledge of its missions, then who is ultimately responsible for the force? Was Maliki lying to cover up the fact that he is using the force for political purposes? Or was someone else—namely the Americans—calling the shots?

Diyala was only the first publicized case of possibly politically motivated arrests. In December the ISOF arrested as many as thirty-five officials in the Interior Ministry who were thought to be in opposition to Maliki's Islamic Dawa Party. This past March the ISOF arrested at least one leader of the Awakening Councils, semiofficial Sunni neighborhood militias that have been increasingly at odds with Maliki over his failure to keep a promise to incorporate the councils into the military or give them other employment.

The Maliki government has developed a "culture of direct control," says Michael Knights, a Lafer Fellow at the Washington Institute and the head of its Iraq program. Knights visits Iraq regularly and has close contact with the country's security services. He says the people in charge of the ISOF at the regional levels are "personally chosen loyalists or relatives of Maliki. It reminds me of Saddam." Knights says that Maliki is only supposed to approve or reject missions that come to him, but occasionally he will "assert his prerogative as the commander in chief and tell the ISOF to do something or not to do something." Knights raises the possibility that the ISOF will become Maliki's personal death squad. "The prime minister is looking for re-election, and there are not that many restraints on his ability to target political opponents, as [his government] has been doing with the Sadrists for years now."

Samarrai, along with other members of Parliament, is calling for disbanding the Counter-Terrorism Bureau. He says there is no legal basis for an armed brigade to exist outside the control of the Interior or Defense ministry. "People are afraid of the existence of an organization with such dreadful capabilities that reports directly to the prime minister," he says.

Member of Parliament Hassan al-Rubaie is concerned about the close relationship between the ISOF and the Americans. "If the US leaves Iraq, this will be the last force they will leave behind," he insists. He is worried that such a powerful and secretive force that is closely tied to the Americans could turn Iraq into a "military base in the region" by allowing the United States to continue to conduct missions in Iraq with the cover of the ISOF. "They have become a replacement" for the Americans, he says.

President Obama has said he plans to increase reliance on the US Special Forces; Defense Secretary Robert Gates's recent appointment of Stanley McChrystal as commander of Afghanistan suggests that he is keeping his word. From 2003 to 2008, McChrystal was the head of the Joint Special Operations Command, which oversees the Army's most secretive forces and is responsible for the training of special forces abroad. McChrystal was also commander of US Special Operations Forces in Iraq for five years, during which time, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, he commanded "units that specialize in guerrilla warfare, including the training of indigenous armies."

"The eventual drawdown in Iraq is not the end of the mission for our elite forces," Gates said in May 2008. Gates hasn't spoken on the issue since Obama took office; but Obama says he will institutionalize irregular warfare capabilities, and the White House stresses the need to "create a more robust capacity to train, equip and advise foreign security forces, so that local allies are better prepared to confront mutual threats."

Bowden says those "local allies" are often used for covert operations. "The United States Special Operations Command cultivates relationships with special forces in other countries because it gives the United States the opportunity of intervening militarily in a covert way," he says. "The ideal covert op is one that is actually carried out by local forces."

As I stand on the tarmac with Trombitas in Area IV, waiting for our helicopter to return and fly us back to the Green Zone, I ask him how long the United States will be involved with the ISOF. "Special forces are special because we do maintain a relationship with foreign forces," he says. "Part of our theater-engagement strategy is to maintain a relationship with those units that are important to the security of the region and to the world." As our helicopter appears in the lightly clouded sky, he chooses his next words carefully: "We are going to have a working relationship for a while," he says. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

On June 12, Noam Chomsky will deeply disappoint 373,000 investigative reporters and news analysts

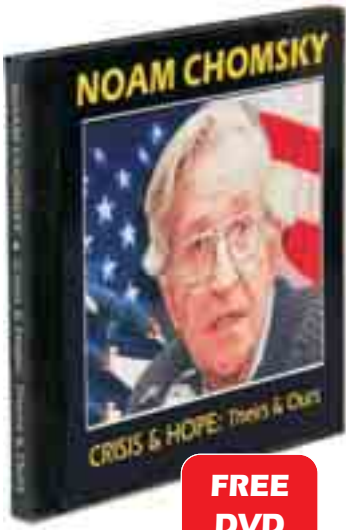
*as well as 15.9 million college students; 6.2 million teachers and professors; 15,000 economists; 18,000 social scientists; 4,700 political scientists; 3,700 sociologists; 3,400 historians; 158,000 librarians; 71,000 lawyers; 51,000 judges and magistrates; 435 Congresspersons; 100 Senators; 50 governors; 9 Supreme Court Justices; and (arguably) one sitting president**

NEW YORK – At 7 pm, on June 12, when Noam Chomsky ascends the podium of Manhattan's historic Riverside Church to deliver one of the most eagerly awaited addresses of the year**, he will deeply disappoint millions of admirers (and detractors) who wish they could be there, but cannot.

Why? Because the Riverside Church nave holds only 1,500. And as I write this, nearly a month before the event, it appears that all of its seats (as well as standing room) may be snapped up in advance by a flood of box-office phone calls and online purchases from eager members of the political-, media-, and academic elites, not to mention a horde of Columbia University students and professors who can easily dash the short 5.37 blocks from their Broadway campus to the church box office, to patiently stand in line for the few remaining seats.

2-hour DVD of Chomsky event is FREE with membership in WBAI Public Radio

But you needn't miss hearing this provocative speech, which many believe will help shock the faltering left consensus back to life. WBAI will gladly *give* it to you – as a thank-you gift with membership.



Why support WBAI?

WBAI Radio has been a unique force for peace and justice for over 50 years – and a forum for voices such as **Noam Chomsky**, **Naomi Klein, Michael Parenti, Howard Zinn**, **Alice Walker, Jim Hightower**, **Amy Goodman, Mumia Abu-Jamal**, and many others you won't hear on corporate media. We broadcast what we please, because we're listener-supported. *No advertising. No corporate censorship. No government control.* Your support helps keep us that way.

Request your free DVD now. Though *reading* Chomsky can be enlightening, *hearing* – and *seeing* – him is electrifying. But you can't get this DVD on Amazon.com. Or see it on CBS or NBC (though Stephen Colbert might do a 10-second clip).

Nor will Chomsky's speech appear in *The New York Times* – whose editors, while admitting that he is "arguably the most important intellectual alive today" and "perhaps the most widely read voice on foreign policy on the planet," were so upset by his ideas that they wouldn't review his books for decades.

We doubt you'll be "upset," but you might be surprised by Chomsky's most recent analysis of issues ranging from the Bank Bailout to indicting Dick Cheney for war crimes to US military intervention in the Middle East to social revolution in South America – to the election of Barack Obama.

Please respond now. Supply of DVDs will be limited.

Payments to WBAI are tax-exempt. Listen to us at 99.5-FM in New York City. Or online at www.wbai.org.

Mail this coupon.
Or phone 1-800-901-7785.
Or go to www.WBAI.org/ChomskyDVD

☐ **YES**, send the **Noam Chomsky** DVD as a free gift, and enroll me as a member of WBAI for only $25.
(Already a member? We'll extend you for another year)

BONUS! Get extra DVDs for your friends – only $12
☐ 1 extra DVD, add $12 ☐ 2 extra DVDs, add $22
☐ 4 extra, add $40 ☐ 6 extra, add $60 ☐ 10, add $100
(Sorry, limit 10 DVDs per member)

Total $_____ *(Make check to WBAI-Pacifica)*
Or charge to ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Amer. Express

Card # _____ Expires___/___
Mr/Ms *(print)*_____
Address_____
City_____State_____Zip_____
Email_____
Signature_____

MAIL TO: WBAI, Chomsky DVD, Dept NA-062209
120 Wall Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10005

* U.S. Govt. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09.*
** Sponsored by The Brecht Forum; Education Ministry of Riverside Church; Mission & Social Justice Commission of Riverside Church; Theater of the Oppressed at Riverside Church; and Theater of the Oppressed Laboratory (TOPLAB).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tales of Tent City

In boom and in bust, homeless encampments are a product of growing inequality and neglect.

by BEN EHRENREICH

"This is the bigger picture," said John Kraintz, with a sweep of his arm, indicating the roughly two dozen remaining tents pitched around him on a muddy, pockmarked field between the city dump and the slow green waters of the American River. Kraintz is a thin man of 57, a former electrician who had lived in Sacramento's parks and riverside lots for seven years. His home had been right here—in Tent City.

ROB SUSSMAN

Kraintz had relocated to Tent City's outer boroughs. Its downtown, which briefly attracted camera crews from all over the world—a Third World shantytown in the capital of the richest state in the richest country!—was a couple of hundred yards away. Depending on whom you ask, somewhere between 150 and 300 people lived in Tent City between November and April. But by the third week in April, when I visited, most had already packed up. Some had migrated to this spot to avoid police attention. But the cops came, handing out notices announcing, "It is unlawful to camp in the City of Sacramento" and giving people two days to leave. ("This is not camping—we're *living*!" yelled one of Kraintz's neighbors.) By the end of the week, everyone had left. Tent City, for that moment at least, had disappeared.

Few people there, though, doubted that it would be back. Tent City is less a single location than a nomadic but constant phenomenon, a shifting blue-tarped shadow to the glass and steel American metropolis. In good times and bad, Tent City comes and goes, forms and scatters and takes shape again. Despite its momentary dispersal in Sacramento, it is still out there—in Seattle, Portland, Reno, Providence, Fresno, even in the sprawling exurbs of southern California in the small city of Ontario. Tent City existed at the height of the real estate boom too, hidden in plain view, an omen for anyone willing to look.

While recent media accounts portrayed Tent City's incarnations as creatures of the recession—reborn Hoovervilles for the laid off and the foreclosed—shantytowns have been a periodic but permanent feature of American urban life for at least the past two decades. They are what connects us to São Paulo, Lagos and Mumbai, physical manifestations of our growing inequality and societal neglect. Seattle saw its first Tent City in 1990. The area now boasts three, one dating back to 2000, another to 2004. Portland's Tent City ("Dignity Village") has been around since 2001. No one living there, says resident Gaye Reyes, is recently homeless. In California's San Joaquin Valley, the City of Fresno last fall began distributing a $2.3 million settlement to homeless people whose property was destroyed when the city repeatedly razed its Tent City between 2004 and 2006, at the apex of the economic boom.

As early as 1989, dozens of homeless were pitching tents on the precise site of this year's Tent City in Sacramento. They called their community, without irony, "Camp Hope." Since then, other tent cities have sprung up there for a few weeks or months. It's hardly an idyllic spot—no sanitary facilities, few trees, no shelter from the wind or rain—but it's out of sight and a short walk to Loaves and Fishes, a nonprofit that provides free meals and other services.

This latest Tent City was notable mainly for its density, a product of increased enforcement of anti-camping ordinances in the city's parkland, where Sacramento's homeless were once able to spread out unmolested. In November police broke up a camp of more than 100 people on the sidewalk outside the Union Gospel Mission. Police officers instructed them, Tent City residents said, to resettle here. The *Sacramento Bee* first reported on the newest Tent City in December. Oprah Winfrey sent a correspondent in February. After that, said Tent City resident Danny Valadez, "It went like a cyclone," buzzing with journalists and new arrivals. Most reporters focused exclusively on the few Tent City residents whose predicaments could be linked directly to the economic collapse. "They were all looking for Henry Fonda [in *The Grapes of Wrath*]," laughs Paul Boden, director of the Western Regional Advocacy Project.

The rise of Tent City, though, says John Foley, director of the nonprofit Sacramento Self-Help Housing, had "almost nothing to do with the recession." But the recession has made poverty visible again, and Tent City tells the grueling backstory to the current recession—nearly thirty years of cuts in social services to the poor and mentally ill, the decimation of the industrial economy and the cruel underside of the housing boom. Kraintz, despite his soil-caked clothes and matted hair, summarized that narrative with more precision than most white-shirted economists can manage: "We've seen falling wages and rising rents. The two finally collided."

The economic collapse has without question pushed people out of their homes. The National Alliance to End Homelessness warns that 1.5 million Americans could be thrown into homelessness over the next two years. In Sacramento, homelessness has jumped 14 percent since 2007, even though the population categorized as "chronically homeless"—the disabled and mentally ill—has fallen by 35 percent. Sacramento was hit particularly hard by the mortgage crisis—the city had the third-highest foreclosure rate in the

Ben Ehrenreich is a journalist and novelist based in Los Angeles. Research support was provided by the Investigative Fund at The Nation Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Learn How to Make the Right Decisions

Master the skills and techniques essential to making smart, educated choices in this 24-lecture course taught by an award-winning professor

The ability to make wise, educated decisions is essential to a successful and fulfilled life. Whether simple or complex, decisions affect your life and the lives of others—your friends, family, and community. But making a good decision is not a chance act. It's a skill—one that can be learned, honed, and perfected.

Now you can approach the critical decisions in your life with a more seasoned eye. In **The Art of Critical Decision Making**, you explore how individuals, groups, and organizations make effective decisions; you also learn tips and techniques to enhance the effectiveness of your own decision making. Taught by award-winning Professor Michael A. Roberto—a scholar of managerial decision making and business strategy—this course is an engaging and practical guide to one of life's most fundamental activities.

In these 24 fascinating lectures, Professor Roberto employs the case method used by America's most prestigious business schools—including Harvard University—to expose you to a wealth of real-world scenarios. With this acclaimed teaching model, you compare and contrast various situations as a way to distinguish between smart and poor decision making.

Whether you're the head of a Fortune 500 company or an everyday household, **The Art of Critical Decision Making** is a toolbox of practical knowledge and skills you can apply to decisions in your daily life and work. By the end of the course, you'll become a better critical thinker—one who can learn from mistakes, weigh individual choices more effectively, and make the right decisions.

About Your Professor

Dr. Michael A. Roberto is the Trustee Professor of Management at Bryant University. He earned his M.B.A. with High Distinction and his D.B.A from Harvard Business school, where he also taught for six years. Professor Roberto received Harvard University's Allyn A. Young Prize for Teaching in Economics.

About Our Sale Price Policy

Why is the sale price for this course so much lower than its standard price? Every course we make goes on sale at least once a year. Producing large quantities of only the sale courses keeps costs down and allows us to pass the savings on to you. This also enables us to fill your order immediately: 99% of all orders placed by 2 pm eastern time ship that same day. Order before July 6, 2009, to receive these savings.

© Konstantin Chagin, 2009. Used under license from Shutterstock, Inc.

About The Teaching Company

We review hundreds of top-rated professors from America's best colleges and universities each year. From this extraordinary group we choose only those rated highest by panels of our customers. Fewer than 10% of these world-class scholar-teachers are selected to make The Great Courses®.

We've been doing this since 1990, producing more than 3,000 hours of material in modern and ancient history, philosophy, literature, fine arts, the sciences, and mathematics for intelligent, engaged, adult lifelong learners. If a course is ever less than completely satisfying, you may exchange it for another, or we will refund your money promptly.

Lecture Titles

1. Making High-Stakes Decisions
2. Cognitive Biases
3. Avoiding Decision-Making Traps
4. Framing—Risk or Opportunity?
5. Intuition—Recognizing Patterns
6. Reasoning by Analogy
7. Making Sense of Ambiguous Situations
8. The Wisdom of Crowds?
9. Groupthink—Thinking or Conforming?
10. Deciding How to Decide
11. Stimulating Conflict and Debate
12. Keeping Conflict Constructive
13. Creativity and Brainstorming
14. The Curious Inability to Decide
15. Procedural Justice
16. Achieving Closure through Small Wins
17. Normal Accident Theory
18. Normalizing Deviance
19. Allison's Model—Three Lenses
20. Practical Drift
21. Ambiguous Threats and the Recovery Window
22. Connecting the Dots
23. Seeking Out Problems
24. Asking the Right Questions

THE TEACHING COMPANY®
The Joy of Lifelong Learning Every Day™
GREAT PROFESSORS, GREAT COURSES, GREAT VALUE GUARANTEED.™

SAVE UP TO $185!
OFFER GOOD UNTIL JULY 6, 2009

1-800-TEACH-12 (1-800-832-2412)
Fax: 703-378-3819

Special offer is available online at
www.TEACH12.com/4ntn

The Great Courses®
THE TEACHING COMPANY®
4151 Lafayette Center Drive, Suite 100
Chantilly, VA 20151-1232

Priority Code 33073

Please send me **The Art of Critical Decision Making**, which consists of twenty-four 30-minute lectures plus Course Guidebooks.

☐ **DVD $69.95** (std. price $254.95) **SAVE $185!**
plus $10 shipping, processing, and Lifetime Satisfaction Guarantee

☐ **Audio CD $49.95** (std. price $179.95) **SAVE $130!**
plus $10 shipping, processing, and Lifetime Satisfaction Guarantee

☐ **Check or Money Order Enclosed**

* Non-U.S. Orders: Additional shipping charges apply.
For more details, call us or visit the FAQ page on our website.

** Virginia residents please add 5% sales tax.

Charge my credit card:

☐ VISA ☐ ☐ ☐

ACCOUNT NUMBER EXP. DATE

SIGNATURE

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

PHONE *(If we have questions regarding your order—required for international orders)*

☐ **FREE CATALOG.** Please send me a free copy of your current catalog (no purchase necessary).

Special offer is available online at www.TEACH12.com/4ntn
Offer Good Through: July 6, 2009

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country in 2007—and folks who have recently seen their incomes disappear are finding themselves with nowhere to turn.

California's ongoing budget crisis hasn't helped. Last year Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger slashed the state's already meager funding for emergency shelters. The year before, he vetoed a $55 million program that would have provided housing for 5,000 people with mental illness. His most recent budget proposal slashes nearly all the services that aid the growing ranks of the poor—cutting eligibility for Social Security and disability and eliminating what's left of the state's welfare system, as well as its entire health insurance program for children. The governor plans to borrow $2 billion from cities and counties, which will mean severely reduced funds on the local level. All of this likely will throw more people onto the streets.

But Tent City, says Joan Burke, advocacy director of Loaves and Fishes, "is the least desirable place to be homeless," and the last place the newly homeless are likely to end up. They stay with friends and relatives until those relationships fray, then in motels, cars and finally shelters. Thus, only a very few of Tent City's inhabitants could pin their plight on the recession.

Since 1996, the government has budgeted precisely zero dollars for new public housing. Waiting lists in Sacramento are five digits deep.

Karen Hersh, 53, her skin red and peeling from poison oak, attributed the failure of her trucking company to rising fuel prices. She lived in her truck when she lost her home and stayed with friends when she lost her truck. Eventually, Hersh ended up in a shelter—"I didn't like it one bit. They steal from you. They gang up on you"—and finally in Tent City.

Fred and Linda, a Latino couple in their early 50s who preferred to keep their surnames to themselves, have been homeless for a year and a half. Fred worked as a mason until he burned his arm in an accident. He took time off to recover, but "when I went back to work, there wasn't a job for me." Construction had ground to a halt. Linda, a sometime warehouse worker, was out of work too. After they lost their apartment, no landlords would consider them. "If you're not employed," said Linda, "it's no go." They had come to Tent City in the hope that the media attention would mean a better chance of finding housing. So far, it hadn't. But Fred's unemployment payments hadn't run out yet, and the pair had rigged makeshift trailers to their bicycles to tow their belongings. If the police push them out, said Fred, "it ain't no big deal. We have three places we're thinking about."

Most of Tent City's residents, though, have been homeless for years. The original causes of their homelessness—an illness or injury, addiction, some life-shattering tragedy—blurred out in the distant past. "But on a structural, societal level," says Burke, the causes of homelessness are far from hazy: "It's the lack of housing that people can afford."

"I used to be a Republican. I voted for Ronald Reagan," a man who identified himself only as Tom M. told me, laughing. But it was Reagan who in his first year as president halved the budget for public housing. Over the course of his first term, more than half a million people were thrown off the disability rolls. "Until then," says Tim Brown, director of Sacramento County's Ending Chronic Homelessness Initiative, "basically there was no homelessness." Since then, neither the disability nor the housing budget has come close to recovering. Clinton-era welfare reforms cut all but the last remaining threads of the Great Society safety net.

Meanwhile, the real estate boom led to a drastic reduction in affordable housing. Through the 1980s and even into the '90s, says Sacramento Self-Help Housing's Foley, the city had no shortage of housing options for the poor: rooming houses, single-room-occupancy hotels, motel-like labor camps for cannery workers. "Almost all of that's gone," he says, victims of the insatiable housing market. Gone also are the vast majority of the unionized cannery and food processing jobs that for decades made it possible for workers here to become homeowners. Tent City sprawled just across the railroad tracks from one of the few major food processing facilities left in the city: the nonunion Blue Diamond almond plant.

Since 1996, the federal government has budgeted precisely zero dollars for new public housing. The waiting lists in Sacramento for Section 8 and public housing are five digits deep. Between 2001 and '09, however, the monthly income required to rent an "affordable" studio apartment here jumped from $1,025 to $1,433, "and wages have not gone up proportionally," Foley says. Working full time at minimum wage in California gets you just $1,280 a month. "It takes two people to rent an apartment," said Tent City resident Jessica McFarlin, "one to pay the bills and one to pay the rent, if you want to have food."

In Sacramento, some subsidized housing options remain for those with disabilities. "If you're disabled," says Brown, "your chances [of finding housing] aren't too bad in the next year." But as to the swelling ranks who are not disabled but simply can't find work—or who have jobs but still can't make their rent—Brown says, "they're shit out of luck."

For Tom M., the math was simple. He fell out of the corporate world several years ago and lived in his van until January, when he could no longer afford to keep it registered. He is 56, with high blood pressure, a heart condition and, he said, "the mental thing"—he's convinced he's being stalked. "It gets pretty intense sometimes," he said. But he has been unable to qualify for disability, which left him with what little money he could earn recycling cans and a monthly county General Relief check for just over $200.

The day before I met him, Tom M. had left Tent City to apply for subsidized housing. His experience, he said, was typical: "I was in line for hours and never got to see them. There's so many people," he shrugged, "and only so much resources."

In the end, Sacramento dealt with its Tent City with more compassion than can usually be expected. "If they had a great big rug they could sweep us under somewhere, they would," predicted Karen Hersh, and she was right. The broom, fortunately,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

came in the form of temporary fixes, not arrests. The city scrambled to raise money for forty additional units of subsidized housing (few of which were ready before Tent City was cleared) and fifty additional shelter beds, which quickly filled. Local advocates for the homeless had vowed civil disobedience if any arrests were made, so to avoid an embarrassing confrontation, the city came up with motel vouchers for the last few dozen holdouts. "The bulk of the people," though, said Loaves and Fishes' Joan Burke, "just dispersed to more hidden camps." By April 20, everyone was gone.

No one pretended the problem had been solved. Renting hotel rooms for the homeless, said Steve Maviglio, a spokesman for Mayor Kevin Johnson, "is obviously not sustainable in the long term," particularly with homelessness on the rise. For now, the newly homeless, whose predicaments are directly related to the recession, are not yet desperate enough to camp in blighted fields. They look less like John Kraintz and Tom M. and more like 38-year-old Kysia Bell, a clear-eyed home health-care worker and mother of two who lost the home she was renting when her landlord fell into foreclosure.

"I didn't know that the owner wasn't paying the mortgage," she said. "We got a note on the door that we had to vacate within two weeks." At the same time, her hours were cut, making it impossible to come up with the deposit for a new apartment. She and her daughters stayed with relatives as long as they could, then with friends and finally in her car until they found beds at St. John's, Sacramento's largest shelter for women and children. Bell was lucky: in 2007, St. John's was forced to turn away about twenty people a day. So far this year, that number is up to 300.

Nearly 400 miles south, in Ontario, California, Tent City hides behind a bureaucratic mask. City officials call it the Temporary Homeless Services Area, or THSA, but until March 2008, it was just Tent City. About nine months earlier, local police began directing everyone they found sleeping in parks and alleys to an empty field near the city's airport. Word got around that you could camp there unharassed, and the new encampment quickly grew.

As in Sacramento, the Ontario Tent City's inhabitants were victims not of the immediate recession but of older, less dramatic economic shifts. Take the white-bearded man who identified himself only as Cowboy. He was a long-distance truck driver until a stroke slurred his speech and paralyzed his right arm. The $900 in veterans' benefits and SSI he receives each month might pay for a small apartment but would leave nothing for food, so Cowboy lived with his mother until she died, then with cousins, then on the streets and finally, at age 57, in Tent City.

In March, after herding the local homeless population to Tent City, police and code enforcement officers descended on the encampment and required its inhabitants to prove they were residents of Ontario. Those who could not—all but 127—were evicted. The city bulldozed and graded the field, erected orderly rows of matching green tents, issued ID cards to those who remained, fenced the encampment and posted a list of rules: no re-entry after 10 PM, no alcohol, no pets, no minors, no visitors. Now private security guards patrol the THSA's perimeters, ejecting anyone who doesn't have per-

Saturday, July 11, 2009
12 noon- 3pm

A Memorial will be held for

FRANKLIN ROSEMONT

1943-2009

Peace Movement, Civil Rights Movement, YPSL, IWW, SDS, Black Swan Press, Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, Illinois Labor History Society, author, editor, poet, artist, teenaged beatnik, lover of the Wild, utopian dreamer, defender of marvelous freedom, & most of all Surrealist

Among his works are *Joe Hill, The IWW & the Making of a Revolutionary Workingclass Counterculture, An Open Entrance to the Shut Palace of Wrong Numbers,* editor of *Arsenal, Surrealist Subversions,* and forthcoming with Robin D.G.Kelley, *Black, Brown & Beige, Surrealist Writings from Africa and the Diaspora*

Among the Speakers

Robin D.G. Kelley, David Roediger, Paul Buhle, John Bracey, Jr., Joseph Jablonski, Gale Ahrens, Paul Garon, Alan Maass

at

The Newberry Library
60 West Walton
Chicago, Illinois
Further info: arcane@ripco.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mission to be there, including reporters.

None of the Tent City residents I interviewed from just outside the fence complained much. They were fed three meals a day and were otherwise left alone. The rules were infantilizing, but the people largely shrugged them off. Still, more than a third of those permitted to stay in the THSA have left for good. No new arrivals have been admitted. Isaac Jackson, coordinator of the county's Office of Homeless Services, credited Ontario with doing "a great job" of reducing Tent City's population. Neither city nor county officials, though, knew if any of those who have left Tent City have found a better source of shelter than a tent.

It seems unlikely. The federal stimulus package will give California $189 million in homelessness prevention funding and another $100 million in community service block grants that local governments can use for homeless services. The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act, passed in May, authorizes another $2.2 billion nationwide. But as the feds give with one hand, the state takes away with the other, and no one at any level of government is attempting to tackle the systemic roots of homelessness, or to reconsider housing as something more vital to human dignity than market forces allow. For now, Cowboy and his neighbors are unaware of any resources available for more permanent lodging than a tent in a fenced-off field.

In April I asked Brenda Hill, who had been there from the start, if she knew where she'd go if Sacramento closed Tent City. She shook her head sadly. "Nope," she said. "Nowhere." ■

Inquisitions

by EDUARDO GALEANO

Origin of Hell

The Catholic Church invented Hell and the Devil.

The Old Testament makes no mention of the perpetual barbecue, neither do its pages feature an appearance by the monster reeking of sulfur who carries a trident and sports horns and a tail, claws and hooves, goat's legs and dragon's wings.

But the church asked itself: What will become of reward without punishment? What will become of obedience without fear?

And it wondered: What will become of God without the Devil? What will become of Good without Evil?

And the church concluded that the threat of Hell is more effective than the promise of Heaven, and from then on ministers and holy fathers have terrorized us with sermons about torture in the fiery abyss where the Evil One reigns.

In the year 2007, Pope Benedict XVI confirmed it:

There is a Hell. And it is eternal.

Arguments of the Faith

For six centuries and in several countries, the Holy Inquisition punished rebels, heretics, witches, homosexuals, pagans…

Many ended up at the stake, sentenced to roast over a slow fire fed with green wood. Many more were subjected to torture. Here are some of the instruments utilized to extract confessions, modify beliefs and sow panic:

the barbed collar,
the hanging cage,
the iron gag that stifled unwanted screams,
the saw that cut you slowly in two,
the finger-stretching tourniquet,
the head-flattening tourniquet,
the bone-breaking pendulum,
the seat of pins,
the long needle that perforated the Devil's moles,
the iron claw that shredded flesh,
the pincers and tongs heated to fiery red,
the sarcophagus lined with sharp nails,
the iron bed that extended until arms and legs got pulled out of their sockets,
the whip with a nail or knife at the tip,
the barrel filled with shit,
the shackles, the stocks, the block, the pillory, the gaff,
the ball that swelled and tore the mouths of heretics, the anuses of homosexuals and the vaginas of Satan's lovers,
the pincers that ground up the tits of witches and adulterers,
and fire on the feet,
among other weapons of virtue.

Evil Copies Good

In one of his frescoes in a chapel in Padua, Giotto painted the torments that demons inflict on sinners in Hell.

As in other artistic works of the period, the instruments of infernal torture, which provoked shock and fear, were the very tools used by the Holy Inquisition to impose the Catholic faith. God inspired his worst enemy: in Hell Satan imitated the technology of pain that the inquisitors applied on earth.

Punishment confirmed that this world was but a dress rehearsal for Hell. In the here and now and in the great beyond, disobedience merited the same reward.

Women Possessed

Theologian and friar Martín de Castañega confirmed that the Devil preferred women to men, because they are pusillanimous and have less robust hearts and more humid brains.

From Mirrors: Stories of Almost Everyone. *Copyright © 2008 by Eduardo Galeano. Translation copyright © 2009 by Mark Fried. Published by Nation Books, a member of the Perseus Books Group, New York. By permission of Susan Bergholz Literary Services, New York, and Lamy, New Mexico.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Satan seduced them by caressing them with his goat's hoof and his wooden claw, or by disguising himself as a toad dressed as a prince.

Exorcisms of possessed women brought overflow crowds to the churches.

Protecting the breast of the exorcist were scapulars filled with consecrated salt, blessed rue and the hair and nails of saints. Crucifix held high, he did battle with witchcraft. The bedeviled woman swore, howled, bit, shrieked insults in the tongues of Hell, and with loud laughter tore off her clothes and proffered her naughty parts. The climax came when the exorcist rolled on the floor hugging the body where the Devil had made himself at home, until the convulsions and wailing ceased.

Afterward, some searched the floor for the nails and bits of glass vomited by the possessed.

The Devil Is Female

Malleus Maleficarum, also known as the Hammer of Witches, recommends the most ruthless techniques for exorcising titty longhaired demons.

At the request of Pope Innocent VIII, two German inquisitors, Heinrich Kramer and Jakob Sprenger, wrote the book that became the juridical and theological basis for the tribunals of the Holy Inquisition.

The authors demonstrate that witches, Satan's harem, represent women in their natural state, for all witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which in women is insatiable. And they warn that such beings of pleasant aspect, fetid touch and deadly company enchant men and attract them, serpent's hiss, scorpion's tail, only to annihilate them.

That treatise on criminology advises torturing everyone suspected of witchcraft. Those who confess deserve the stake; those who do not also deserve the stake, because only a witch, fortified by her lover the Devil at the witches' Sabbath, could resist such suffering without spilling all.

Pope Honorius III decreed:

"Women should not speak. Their lips carry the stigma of Eve, who led men to perdition."

Eight centuries later, the Catholic Church still denies women the pulpit.

The same fear drives fundamentalist Muslims to mutilate women's genitalia and cover their faces.

And a sense of relief moves Orthodox Jewish men to begin each day by whispering:

"Thanks be to God for not making me a woman."

Teresa

Teresa of Ávila entered the convent to save herself from Hell, the conjugal Hell. Better to be a slave to God than servant to a brute.

But St. Paul gave women three rights: to obey, to serve and to remain silent. So the representative of His Holiness the Pope found Teresa guilty of being an apprehensive and unsettled female, disobedient and contumacious, who under the guise of devotion invents evil doctrines against St. Paul, who commanded women not to teach.

In Spain, Teresa founded several convents where the nuns not only gave classes but were in charge, where virtue was prized and lineage worthless, where no one had to submit proof of clean blood.

In 1576 she was accused before the Inquisition, because her grandfather claimed to be a true Christian but was a converted Jew, and because her mystical trances were the work of the Devil ensconced in her body.

Four centuries later, on his deathbed, Francisco Franco wielded Teresa's right arm to defend himself from the Devil. By one of those strange turns life takes, Teresa had become a saint and a role model for Iberian women, and except for one foot, which ended up in Rome, her remains were housed in several churches around Spain.

Juana

Like Teresa of Ávila, Juana Inés de la Cruz became a nun to remain free of the matrimonial cage.

Like Teresa, in the convent her talent caused offense. Did this head of a woman contain the brain of a man? Why did she have a man's handwriting? Since she was such a good cook, why would she want to think? Deriding her questioners, she answered:

"What could we women know but kitchen philosophy?"

Like Teresa, Juana wrote, although the priest Gaspar de Astete warned her that Christian maidens need not know how to write, and it might cause them harm.

Like Teresa, Juana not only wrote but, scandal of scandals, she wrote undeniably well.

In different centuries, on different shores of the same sea, Juana the Mexican and Teresa the Spaniard defended, aloud and on paper, the despised half of the world.

Like Teresa, Juana was threatened by the Inquisition. And the church, her church, persecuted her for extolling human concerns as much or more than divine ones, and for seldom obeying, and for questioning far too much.

With blood, not ink, Juana signed her confession. She vowed eternal silence. And mute, she died.

We Were All Executioners

Little or no change has come to Bòria Street in Barcelona, although now it devotes itself to serving other needs.

During a good part of the Middle Ages, it was one of the settings where European justice was turned into public spectacle.

The jester and the musicians headed up the procession. The condemned man or woman left the jail on the back of an ass, naked or nearly so, and while getting the lash he or she was subjected to showers of abuse, blows, saliva, shit, rotten eggs and other homages from the crowd.

The most enthusiastic punishers were also the most enthusiastic sinners.

Hendrickje

In 1654, a young and flagrantly pregnant woman named Hendrickje Stoffels was judged and found guilty by the Council of the Reformed Church in Amsterdam.

She confessed to having fornicated with the painter Rem-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

brandt and admitted to sharing his bed without being married, like a whore, or in a more literal translation, committing whoredom.

The council punished her by obliging her to repent and do penance and by permanently excluding her from the table of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rembrandt was not found guilty, perhaps because the jury had in mind the episode of Eve and the apple. But the scandal caused the price of his work to tumble, and he had to declare bankruptcy.

The master of chiaroscuro, who revealed light born of darkness, spent his final years in the shadows. He lost his house and his paintings. He was buried in a rented grave.

Tituba

She was captured in South America as a child and was sold and sold again, and then once more, passed from owner to owner until she ended up in the town of Salem in North America.

There, in that Puritan sanctuary, the slave Tituba served in the home of the Rev. Samuel Parris.

The daughters of the reverend adored her. They were in heaven when Tituba told them stories of apparitions or read their fortunes in the white of an egg. And in the winter of 1692, when the girls were possessed by Satan and writhed shrieking on the floor, only Tituba could calm them. She caressed them and whispered stories until they fell asleep in her lap.

That sealed her fate: she was the one who had brought Hell into the virtuous kingdom of God's chosen people.

The storytelling magician was put in the stocks in the public square, and she confessed.

They accused her of baking pies from the Devil's recipe book, and they whipped her until she said yes.

They accused her of dancing naked at the witches' Sabbath, and they whipped her until she said yes.

They accused her of sleeping with Satan, and they whipped her until she said yes.

And when they told her that her accomplices were two old ladies who never went to church, the accused became the accuser and she pointed her finger at the possessed pair. And they stopped whipping her.

Then other accused also accused.

And the gallows were never empty.

The Torturer's Confession

In 2002, Al Qaeda leader Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi was tortured until he confessed that Iraq had trained him in the use of chemical and biological weaponry. Immediately, the government of the United States joyfully brandished his words as proof that Iraq deserved to be invaded.

Not long thereafter, the truth came out: as usual, the tortured had said what the torturer wanted to hear.

But any discomfiture from that revelation did not impede the US government from practicing or preaching torture around the world, calling it by its many stage names: alternative means of coercion, intensive interrogation technique, pressure and intimidation tactic, method of convincing…

With less and less dissembling, the biggest of the mass media now exalt the merits of the machinery for grinding human flesh, while more and more people applaud or at least accept it. Don't we have a right to defend ourselves from the terrorists and criminals threatening us?

But the inquisitors knew only too well, as do the country-snatchers of today: torture is useless for protecting people. It is only good for terrorizing them.

The bureaucracy of pain tortures in order to perpetuate the power of the powers it serves. A confession extracted by torture is worth little or nothing. But in the torture chamber the powerful do drop their masks. By torturing, they confess that fear is their daily bread. ■

Montevideo, Uruguay, 2007

Letters

(continued from page 2)

calls, I was assured that a "case manager" (who seemed to only have voicemail) had been assigned. After another multitude of follow-up calls, I was denied refinancing because one document was missing from my file. The clincher is that the document was *not* listed on the checklist of required documents from the website. I was furious and asked why no one had bothered to call me. The only response was, Sorry, your case is closed—you are welcome to start the process over again…

I question whom these programs will actually help. I'm betting on big business, corporations and the financial elite.

Robert M. Laskarzewski

Socialist Reading List

New York City

George Scialabba's May 11 "Only Words," a beautifully written, sensible, even tragic analysis of two books on contemporary liberalism is, in the view of this *Nation* reader and "Western Marxist," superb. His too infrequent essays strike just the right tone for socialists who need to retain their commitments and keep up with the lesser books that big-time publishers bring out. I am sad to find that both the New York Public Library and Amazon seem not to have his *Divided Mind* or *What Are Intellectuals Good For?*

Marvin Gettleman

Thanks for the Poetry

San Jose, Calif.

Thank you for the Adrian Louis poem "Rockabilly Blues" [May 11]. More people need exposure to his work—and to Native American literature in general.

David Yohn

A Matter of Declension & No Capital

In Jana Prikryl's "The Kundera Conundrum" [June 8], the last syllable of Martin M. Šimecka's name was misspelled. Also, Dana Goldstein's June 15 "The Selling of School Reform" should have said "the hedge fund Khronos *LLC*" (not *Capital*).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books & the Arts.

Off Camera

by SCOTT SAUL

The year 1943 seemed, to contemporary observers, "1776 for the Negro"—a revolutionary time in which the promises of full citizenship for African-Americans were finally to be redeemed. Franklin Delano Roosevelt had desegregated the war industries two years before, and blacks were migrating en masse from the Jim Crow South to Northern cities, streaming into decent-paying jobs as welders, shipbuilders and machinists. The war was stirring a passionate commitment from black Americans, who came to understand it as a fight against fascism abroad and racism at home—and to understand themselves, in turn, as democracy's cutting edge.

Yet in retrospect 1943 was also a time of quiet counterrevolution, in which longstanding inequities were being consolidated under the pretense of business as usual. The National Association of Real Estate Boards, for instance, issued a seemingly innocuous brochure titled "Fundamentals of Real Estate Practice," which warned realtors that, no matter the size of the down payment on the table, they needed to guard against selling to undesirable elements. "The prospective buyer might be a bootlegger who would cause considerable annoyance to his neighbors, a madam who had a number of call girls on her string, a gangster who wants a screen for his activities by living in a better neighborhood" or—the grace note here—"a colored man of means who was giving his children a college education and thought they were entitled to live among whites." Just as more blacks were earning enough to consider moving to better neighborhoods, that is, realtors were being instructed that they needed, in defense of American property values, to stave off this "form of blight" and nix any such deal.

It might seem incongruous to lump together bootleggers, madams, gangsters and upwardly mobile black Americans, as if black wealth were a form of ill-gotten gain, but that bitter absurdity sits at the heart of *Sweet Land of Liberty*, Thomas J. Sugrue's panoramic account of the civil rights movement in the North. Again and again, Sugrue shows, Northern blacks rallied against racial inequality but were shut out from postwar prosperity—isolated from job- and tax-rich suburbs, their neighborhoods demolished or cordoned off by urban renewal, their schools left underfunded and decaying—in an exclusionary process ratified by state-backed policies and court-issued decisions. *Sweet Land of Liberty* is a sobering and meticulous excavation of the barriers to Northern black advancement in the three decades after World War II—an invaluable historical primer on why, even with the recent expansion of the black middle class, black household wealth remains distressingly low on average, only one-tenth of that of white households.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, PRINT DEPARTMENT

Mothers for Adequate Welfare demonstrating in Boston's South End, 1966

Sweet Land of Liberty
The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North.
By Thomas J. Sugrue.
Random House. 688 pp. $35.

The book is also a bold, if decidedly underdramatic, rewriting of civil rights history. In now-standard accounts like the PBS documentary *Eyes on the Prize*, the Northern movement literally explodes into view with the urban insurrections of the mid- to late '60s—with Stokely Carmichael's chant of "Black Power" taken up in burning cities from Watts to Newark. From this angle, the Northern civil rights movement seems to coincide with the starburst, and subsequent flameout, of Black Power, and Black Power appears largely as a betrayal of Martin Luther King Jr.'s inclusive vision rather than as a strategy that evolved from the painful dilemmas faced by the Northern side of the movement.

Sweet Land recovers an altogether different Northern movement, one that generally operated far from the cameras of the major networks (though black newspapers like the *Chicago Defender* and *Pittsburgh Courier* covered it fastidiously). Its most powerful foot soldiers were not men packing guns but mothers carrying picket signs and filing legal briefs on behalf of their children, community organizers armed with clipboards and pens, and social scientists wielding an array of statistics to press the cause. Sugrue offers a history of the Northern civil rights movement in which the Black Panthers have been demoted to bit players, Angela Davis and the Attica prison revolt make no appearance and

---

Scott Saul teaches American studies at the University of California, Berkeley, and is the author of Freedom Is, Freedom Ain't: Jazz and the Making of the Sixties. *He is working on a biography of comic Richard Pryor.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a less-celebrated band of local activists—from smaller cities like Jersey City and New Rochelle—dominates the stage, battling against faceless if powerful entities like the National Association of Real Estate Boards.

It's not an easy story to tell. The old civil rights story may be profoundly incomplete, as Sugrue and a new generation of historians have suggested, but it owes its endurance to undeniably riveting characters and an easily grasped dramatic arc, from the "once upon a time" of *Brown v. Board of Education* to the qualified "happily ever after" of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Even a historian's historian like Sugrue sometimes struggles to animate his tale, which is mostly the arcless story of how local activists exposed hidden structures of inequality, only to learn they were much more difficult to dismantle than to describe. That said, having a movement that doesn't move was a much more poignant problem for the movement itself, which was stymied in no small part because its adversary was changeable, elusive and frustratingly impersonal—often simply "the market." Unlike in the South, few Northern whites openly defended racial injustice. The sorting of blacks into less desirable schools, careers and neighborhoods, they suggested, "just happened"—an argument that resonated in the culture and, perhaps more fatefully, in the courts, where justices interpreted *Brown v. Board of Education* as a mandate requiring proof of discriminatory intent. Iconoclastic NAACP lawyer Paul Zuber, one of *Sweet Land*'s heroes, summed up the South-North contrast this way: "Down home, our bigots come in white sheets. Up here, they come in Brooks Brothers suits and ties." The racism of the North wore the robes of cultural legitimacy; to many whites, it was wrapped up in their pursuit of the American Dream.

One of the most insistent lessons of *Sweet Land of Liberty* is that not all Northern segregation was created equal—and that the more segregation created channels of economic opportunity for white parents and their children, the more fiercely it was defended. Activists were generally able, through cunning and courage, to dismantle segregation where wealth seemed less at stake—for instance, in the realms of public accommodation and amusement. Take the case of the NAACP campaign against the RKO chain, which, like many Northern movie theater chains in the 1940s, found ways to turn away black patrons while publicly conforming to antidiscrimination statutes. Its ticket sellers would not overtly reject black customers: they simply would stop work when blacks arrived at their counter or find some other means of delaying the sale.

In response, the NAACP's Cincinnati chapter fashioned a two-pronged campaign of litigation and civil disobedience. A black model citizen—James Smith, a "brilliant student and star athlete" at the University of Cincinnati—approached an RKO ticket counter, accompanied by three sympathetic whites. (The NAACP knew that only white testimony would be given sufficient credibility in the courts.) After he was refused service, Smith became a plaintiff in a lawsuit against RKO, repeatedly turning down RKO's settlement offers in order to tie up the company's lawyers.

> One of Sugrue's key lessons is that not all segregation in the North was created equal.

Meanwhile, the NAACP organized dozens of "theater excursions" inspired by the Smith episode—more model black citizens queuing up, more white witnesses trained to observe discriminatory practice in all its particulars. Ticket sellers would sit silent rather than provide fodder for litigation, and the theater's business often shut down for as long as a half-hour as employees scrambled to resolve the impasse. The campaign lasted nearly a year, but on May 24, 1941, RKO officially embraced nondiscrimination—a clear triumph for the NAACP, which, in Sugrue's account, is credited with being more grassroots oriented and strategically imaginative than is commonly assumed.

By contrast, those activists who took on educational inequality and housing discrimination secured fewer straightforward victories. The Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, while directed toward Southern schools, had a galvanizing effect on Northern blacks, who seized upon its argument that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal"; the phrase offered hope that, whether or not a school district explicitly separated students by race, the courts would remedy instances of de facto segregation. Before *Brown*, Northern efforts to desegregate schools had tended to be located in smaller towns like New Jersey's Toms River, Montclair and East Orange, where black communities were close-knit and segregation could be seen as a small-scale human failing. After *Brown*, the fight widened to larger cities and the structural patterns that lay behind educational inequity: segregation in education was tied, through the concept of the "neighborhood school," to segregation in housing, and one could not be tackled without the other.

The 1960 campaign to desegregate New Rochelle schools suggests the inventiveness and tenacity of these post-*Brown* activists—and, again, of local chapters of the NAACP. The campaign's flash point was the Lincoln School, which was attended overwhelmingly by black students and was so dilapidated that its building was sheathed in scaffolding to guard against falling bricks and concrete. The New Rochelle school district wanted to renovate the building; the NAACP, with the support of New Rochelle's black parents, argued that the school should be closed down and its students transferred to other schools in the district. As the NAACP prepared its lawsuit in the fall, the black mothers of New Rochelle adopted a parallel strategy of direct action. They boycotted the Lincoln School, attempted to register their children at all of New Rochelle's white-dominated elementary schools and staged sit-ins and marches on their campuses to draw media attention. New Rochelle was dubbed the "Little Rock of the North"; even Ghana's prime minister Kwame Nkrumah blessed the effort.

The white parents of New Rochelle countered, in an argument that would gain traction over the coming decades, that they were colorblind liberals acting in the best interests of all New Rochelle children, black children included, by refusing to adopt a transfer policy based on race. "Nothing makes my blood boil more," said New Rochelle's school board president, "than a letter from the white citizens' council saying 'keep up the good work.'" The response was typical: by 1963, 75 percent of Northern whites said they supported the *Brown* decision—in effect, disassociating themselves from archsegregationists—but few supported desegregation measures in their own backyard.

In this superheated atmosphere, the NAACP filed its suit and won—Lincoln was demolished, black students were transferred—but on a larger level, the protests in New Rochelle and other Northern cities had a mixed effect. As a rule, the more integrated a school district became, the more white parents sought a way out—by moving to more "exclusive" neighborhoods or transferring their children to private schools—and, as a result, school districts often resegregated over time. Equity

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Don't miss the boat!

The Nation's 12th Annual Seminar Cruise to the Caribbean

$100 DISCOUNT IF YOU BOOK BY JUNE 15!

Katrina vanden Heuvel and **Victor Navasky** invite you to join them on the good ship Eurodam, December 12–19, 2009. Destination: the balmy Caribbean. Your shipmates will include a crew of provocative panelists and simpatico political portsiders. Lots of serious fun in the Nation Cruise tradition. Stimulating seminars and panel discussions. Up-close conversations with your favorite *Nation* writers and columnists. Stopovers at exotic ports of call. Soaking up the sun. Dancing under the stars. Fine wining and dining. Shipboard romance! Shuffleboard! It's all up to you.

THE Nation.

For more information:
NationCruise.com (888) 833-4339
groups@the-cruise-authority.com

Howard Dean • Katie Halper • Bob Grossman • Patricia J. Williams
Lewis Lapham • Robert Scheer • William Greider • E.L. Doctorow • Narda Zacchino

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in education was a moving target. Paul Zuber, who had spearheaded the legal case in New Rochelle, persevered and ratcheted up his rhetoric. "Residents of expensive homes are not entitled to a public school attended only by children whose parents own expensive homes," he argued in 1962. "The North has a choice. They can desegregate voluntarily, or they will be forced to do so." Other activists, though, started to question whether it made sense to double down on the fight for integrated schools: perhaps it was better, given the rancor stirred by desegregation, simply to call for urban schools to be adequately funded and more accountable to the communities they served.

Open-housing advocates faced a similar dilemma by the mid-'60s. They had targeted restrictive covenants in the courts and sponsored several "move-ins," in which middle-class black families were recruited to open up a wedge in all-white enclaves like Levittown, Pennsylvania. But white resistance was intense, and the rewards, while symbolically large, were logistically meager. It took several years to recruit a single black family, William and Daisy Myers and their three children, for the Levittown move-in, and then white Levittowners led an extended "war of nerves" against them, rallying outside their home during the day, breaking their windows at night and intimidating their supporters. The violence recalled segregation battles in the South, but the logic behind it had a Northern stamp: one white neighbor confessed to a reporter that William Myers was "probably a nice guy, but every time I look at him I see $2,000 drop off the value of my house." Two years after moving into Levittown, the Myerses moved out, tired of the experiment. Like education activists, then, housing activists started turning away from the integrationist ideal and toward the thorny problems faced by poor and working-class blacks, who had been left behind in the search for "model" move-in families. The ghetto, not the suburbs, would become the new proving ground for housing reform, as tenant organizing and community-based economic development captured the imagination of the movement.

By the mid-'60s, even those desegregated RKO theaters seemed like a hollow prize, devalued by the same one-way flow of wealth to the suburbs that frustrated activists on other fronts. As whites fled cities for suburbia, the movie theaters followed—along with the swimming pools and amusement parks that had also just been integrated. Blacks ended up with fewer choices for diversion in the cities where they lived and were made to feel less than welcome in the suburban neighborhoods favored by entertainment chains; the consumer's republic did not extend to them. Ever the structuralist, Sugrue concludes this relatively heartening chapter with a grim observation: "It was not coincidental that just as black consumers gained access to urban commerce, it began to decentralize."

By this point in his story, Sugrue has offered a sharp corrective to prevailing civil rights narratives that place the movement's center of gravity in the South before 1965. He has shifted our attention from the movement's front-page victories to its "paradoxes and ambiguities." In the process, by accounting for the deep-seated frustrations that surfaced dramatically in the urban riots of the mid-'60s, he has also altered our sense of the political battles of the late '60s. It's hard to see the white resistance to Black Power as a "backlash," given that such resistance dogged the civil rights movement from its inception and was among the factors that sapped black activists' faith in the project of integration.

The welfare rights movement was the Northern civil rights movement at its finest.

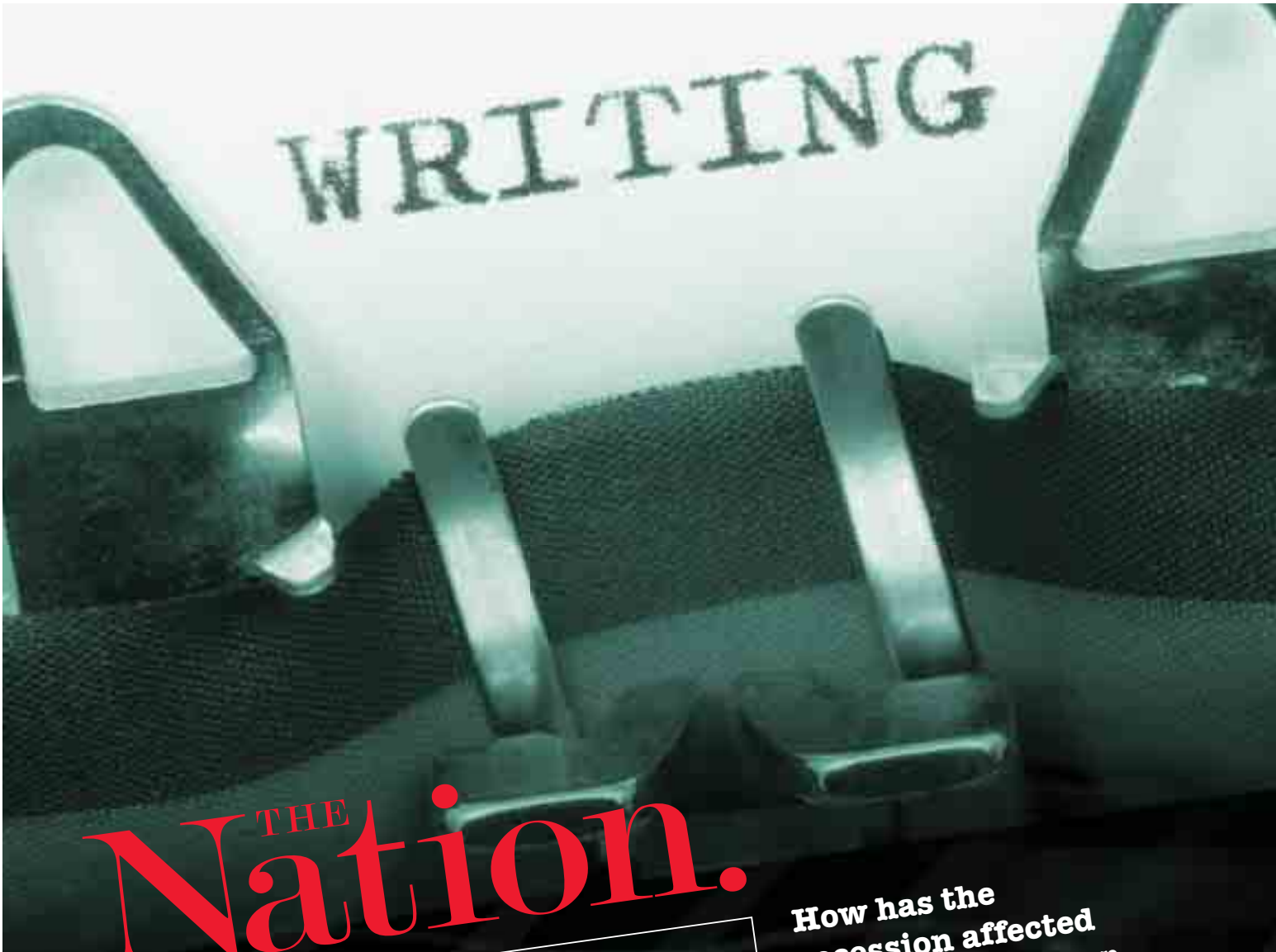
What Sugrue does next, though, is more surprising still, and refreshingly independent-minded. While he pays tribute to Black Power's ideological diversity and its search for alternatives to racial liberalism, he reassesses its usual exponents, the Black Panthers. He takes a dim view of the Panthers' "romanticization of violence," arguing that it became "a self-fulfilling prophecy" when authorities took literally the threats of police assassination illustrated, quite graphically, in the party newspaper. Sugrue also puts the Panthers' community service programs in a rarely noted broader context: "Claims that there was something new and revolutionary about the establishment of free breakfast programs and health clinics revealed a willful ignorance of the extraordinary array of black-led and interracial social service agencies, meal programs, and health clinics, most of which operated off camera."

Not coincidentally, "off camera" was precisely where women activists were likely to be at the height of Black Power, and Sugrue has kinder words for the alternative, and less theatrical, strand of black radicalism they sponsored. Generally speaking, the radicalism spearheaded by black men in the late '60s was suspicious of the state. In the rhetoric of the Panthers, the state was a police state, and the "pigs" were the enemy; the language of revolutionary honor brooked little room for compromise. By contrast, female activists were more likely to exploit the opening provided by Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and to see the state as a provider of services, a welfare state. When Johnson's war on poverty channeled funding to Community Action Agencies, women assumed positions of leadership: in Philadelphia, more than 70 percent of elected Community Action board members were women.

The welfare rights movement was, by Sugrue's lights, the Northern civil rights movement at its finest—as rigorous as it needed to be to define a problem, and as supple as it needed to be to tackle it. Ideologically pioneering, it rebutted the prevalent notion that there was a "culture of poverty," arguing instead that state policies around welfare created a poverty trap; moreover, it forced policy-makers, who previously had disparaged "matriarchal" families, to recognize the plight of poor women with children. Strategically resourceful, it asked poor mothers to march, social workers to change the system from within and activist lawyers to challenge the arbitrariness of eligibility standards in the courts. And through the creation of the umbrella National Welfare Rights Organization, it knitted together hundreds of local grassroots groups into a coalition that could press for changes on the largest structural level.

This broad-based interracial coalition was not only admirable; it was effective—a rare example of political success in a book full of campaigns that, however heroic, could not budge the systems they took on. The Supreme Court ruled that welfare was "not a gratuity" but an entitlement, and that welfare recipients had the right to a hearing before their relief payments were cut off. Politicians modified eligibility rules at the same time that poor women became more conscious of the benefits they were entitled to, and consequently there was a sea change in the administration of the system: in the space of ten years, the percentage of eligible families receiving benefits climbed from one-third to nearly 90 percent. Insofar as the war on poverty reduced black poverty, studies have concluded, it was due to this change in welfare disbursal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



THE Nation.

Student Writing Contest 2009

Sponsored by the BIL Charitable Trust to recognize and reward the best in student writing and thinking.

How has the recession affected you, your family or someone you know?

Tell us in 800 words or fewer.

Eligibility:
All high school and college students

Prize:
Winners receive
$1,000
and essays are published in The Nation

Deadline:
June 15

More Information:
TheNation.com/student

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sweet Land of Liberty is so capacious, encyclopedic really, that it can be startling to realize all it leaves out—not in terms of ground it doesn't cover but rather in terms of dimensions it doesn't probe. Happily, it resurrects a cast of less-remembered activists and traces their individual itineraries; less happily, it does not ask why they devoted so much of their lives to the movement, how they sustained themselves in its darker moments or how their lives changed with its vicissitudes. The human drama we so often associate with civil rights history—A. Philip Randolph jousting with Franklin Roosevelt at the White House over the integration of war industries; Martin Luther King Jr. praying to God for guidance after the bombing of his Montgomery home—is passed over so that Sugrue might focus on the nuts and bolts of organization, policy and court rulings.

Against the tale of death and redemption, Sugrue offers one of perseverance without relief.

Sweet Land may even be, on principle, antipsychological: one of the book's few openly polemical turns is Sugrue's critique of how social psychology misled the movement, promising activists that if whites were in contact with respectable black men and women, they would be shed of their prejudice and equality would become the law of the land. As Sugrue underscores, whites in the postwar era did lose much of their animosity toward blacks—in a 2007 survey, 87 percent of whites claimed to have black friends—but that transformation of the white psyche has paid many fewer dividends than expected. It may have helped to elect a mixed-race African-American to the presidency, but black babies still die more than twice as often as white babies, black men still live six years less on average than white men, black Americans are still almost six times as likely to be incarcerated as white Americans and black communities are still ravaged by levels of violence unfamiliar to white America: in a recent study, 70 percent of blacks reported that they knew someone who had been shot within the past five years. We seem, that is, to have arrived at a near-reversal of the state of affairs that Swedish social scientist Gunnar Myrdal diagnosed in 1944: "The social paradox in the North is exactly this, that almost everybody is against discrimination in general but, at the same time, almost everybody practices discrimination in his own personal affairs." The paradox nowadays is that fewer whites practice discrimination in their personal affairs, but at the same time, a powerful majority countenances discrimination in general.

Sugrue's brief against the "prejudice" school of social psychology is convincing and should be required reading for all those pundits who enthused that Barack Obama's victory meant that the civil rights movement could hang up a "mission accomplished" sign. (For those unrepentant holdouts, here's another sobering statistic: among whites nationwide, John McCain beat Obama by a twelve-point margin.) Still, it's one thing to document how a psychological paradigm created false expectations, and another to downplay the psychological dimensions of experience in toto. *Sweet Land*'s activists analyze their dilemmas in a cultural and emotional vacuum; they can seem like walking position papers, people with no time for such frivolities as family, church or entertainment—this despite the fact that the rise of "soul" culture counts as one of the Northern civil rights movement's most lasting contributions to American life. Fittingly, the book has an especially high regard for social scientists who gathered data, crunched numbers and produced reports documenting inequality—intellectuals who, in their faith in the power of statistics, much resemble Thomas J. Sugrue.

The problem here is not that *Sweet Land*'s analysis is wrong but rather that the book isn't equipped to meet the larger challenge it faces: how to animate those damning statistics, and the lives of those who have struggled against them, so that they have the strength to take on the morality-play version of civil rights history, shift our cultural memory and galvanize a new debate about racial inequality. Against the traditional, and quite Christian, tale of sin, suffering, death and redemption, Sugrue offers a numbers-driven story of perseverance without relief—the myth of Sisyphus rather than *A Pilgrim's Progress*. How to produce a PBS miniseries based on that?

Sugrue comes closest to capturing the soul of the Northern movement with the twin tales of Herman Ferguson and Roxanne Jones. Ferguson was a New York City teacher and school administrator, "one of those mild-mannered, slow-burning but very dedicated kind of guys," in the words of a colleague. In the spring of 1963 he led protests against a Jamaica, Queens, bank for its "Billy Banjo" mural, a plantation scene with a smiling, strumming, barefoot Negro at its center. That summer, he spearheaded a campaign demanding that black workers be employed in the construction of a 6,000-unit apartment complex. The demonstrations grew more militant until, in September, Ferguson and eight other protesters broke into the construction site, locked themselves to the top of a crane and threw away the keys. By the end of 1963 the campaign had widened to include boycotts against neighborhood stores and had drawn in Malcolm X, with his call for black communities to "buy black."

Yet while Ferguson's methods became steadily more confrontational, they didn't produce the hoped-for results: even "Billy Banjo," with his wide grin and straw hat, was a tough, unmoving antagonist. By early 1964, Ferguson had joined Malcolm's Organization of Afro-American Unity, chairing its education program. When Malcolm was assassinated not long after, Ferguson blamed the government and turned broodingly apocalyptic, eventually calling for blacks to "obtain weapons and practice using them" in preparation for the imminent race war.

His paranoia, while profound, was not totally misplaced. In 1967, Ferguson and fifteen other members of the Revolutionary Action Movement were arrested on charges of conspiracy, accused of having planned raids on the homes of more moderate civil rights leaders. Yet who were the actual conspirators here? Ferguson and his comrades had stockpiled guns and ammunition under the auspices of the "Jamaica Rifle and Pistol Club," but an undercover police officer revealed, during the ensuing trial, that he was the one who had purchased the maps of the relevant neighborhoods and copied out the directions to the homes. When the jury—all white and all male—found Ferguson guilty under an obscure New York law forbidding "anarchistic" conspiracies, Ferguson refused to serve time, jumping bail and moving to the socialist state of Guyana, where he lived for nineteen years under an assumed name.

If Ferguson's trajectory suggests a sadly familiar spiral of radicalization and repression, the story of Roxanne Jones is a tale less told, perhaps because it asks us to reconcile how, in the wake of the civil rights movement, black Americans have been simultaneously empowered and marginalized. Born in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

South Carolina in 1928, and the first black woman elected to the Pennsylvania State Senate, Jones lived nearly half her adult life on welfare and cut her teeth as an organizer with the welfare rights movement. In 1976 she co-founded Philadelphia Citizens in Action, an organization that advocated for the city's poor in a post–Great Society moment. While Ronald Reagan conjured up the image of a welfare queen driving a white Cadillac, Jones highlighted the image's absurdity. She herself could not afford a car—only a quarter of the people in her neighborhood even had access to one—and much of her community work tried to figure out how to shuttle people without cars to jobs outside their neighborhood. Through the early '80s, she remained undeterred by the conservative counterrevolution, fighting back by filing a lawsuit against Pennsylvania's workfare program and leading a two-week occupation of the State Capitol rotunda.

Deciding that community organizing was not enough to remedy the plight of the urban poor, Jones made an Obama-like transition: in 1984, two years after occupying the Capitol rotunda as a protester, she returned to it as a state senator, building bridges between policy wonks and welfare recipients, corporate attorneys and ex-cons. Like many black officials elected to legislatures in the post–civil rights wave, however, she found it easier to be re-elected than to influence policy. Most of her proposals were torpedoed by a Republican majority. One of her last acts was to introduce legislation that would provide reimbursement for the bus fares of poor children attending school; it too was defeated. By 1983, Pennsylvania's welfare benefits had dipped below pre-movement levels; by 1992, federal welfare payments were 43 percent lower than in 1970. In August 1996, two months after Jones's death, Bill Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, reversing the gains secured by Jones and other activists by limiting welfare to a temporary program.

It's easier to explain why Herman Ferguson ended up in Guyana, the vanishing point of his militant journey, than to explain why Jones ended up a coalition-builder with no forceful coalition behind her, a lonely defender of the poor. Sugrue deserves much credit for forcing attention on the hard questions that the Northern civil rights movement asked of American society. He deserves even more for forcing attention on the arduous questions that the movement's disappointments reflect back on us. ■

Hold the whole world in your hand with…

jomirascope

8 x 20 monocular

from us only $59.95* why pay more?

***But read this ad for an even better deal**

• *The optics of jomirascope are 8x20 – 8x magnification with 20 mm objective lens. It comes in a neat zippered carrying case. The objective lens can be used as an 8x magnifier. A 25x microscope attachment ($29.95, 3 for $59.90) is also available.*

Jomirascope is so small that it fits unobtrusively in a man's coat pocket or a lady's purse. Yet it packs a tremendous wallop in its tiny body. Its 8 x 20 fully prismatic and hard-coated optics give you 8x magnification, with a remarkable field of 366 ft. at 1,000 yds. Its 20 mm objective lens affords unusual light gathering even at dusk or dawn. What was that rustling in the bushes? With **jomirascope** you'll discover that it was an ivory-billed woodpecker. Do you wish to explore every feature on the moon, or (with some luck) discern the rings of Saturn? **jomirascope** will be your instrument of choice. Much smaller than even "pocket" binoculars and with greater magnification than most, **jomirascope** should be your constant companion.

We are the exclusive importers of this outstanding optical device and are therefore able to bring it to you at the great price of just $59.95. **But, here is the even better deal: Buy two jomirascopes for $119.90 and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments, absolutely FREE!** You really shouldn't be without it, so take advantage of this of this offer and order your **jomirascope(s)** today!

How to order

You may order by toll-free phone, by mail, or by fax and pay by check or AMEX /Visa/ MasterCard. Please give order code shown. Add $6.95 for one, $9.90 for three ship./ins. and sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day refund and one-year warranty. We do not refund postage. For customer service or wholesale information, please call (415) 356-7801. **Please give order code Z175.**

jomira
division of jomira/advance
470 Third Street, #211, San Francisco, CA 94107

Order by toll-free phone: 1-800/600-2777, or (fastest!) by fax: 1-415/356-7804.
Visit our website at www.jomira.com

Nation Mart

WWW.THENATIONMART.COM

The Nation Inauguration Poster

Featuring original illustration by John Mavroudis. 18" X 24" poster.

$15+SH

Order online – www.thenationmart.com – or mail to: The Nation Mart, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BACK TALK

ADRIAN BELLESGUARD

Graham Parker

Graham Parker has been making art with found data for the past decade. His latest project is *Fair Use: Notes From Spam* (Book Works; £14.95). The book comprises five pamphlets that explore the historical, personal and environmental aspects of spam. Parker also writes about scambaiters, people who engage with spammers in order to play elaborate pranks. They're confident of their superiority to spammers—perhaps too confident. Vanity is, Parker notes, an essential ingredient of any con. —*Christine Smallwood*

How much does spam resemble con games of the past?

It has a certain sense of the potential of the network. The Union Pacific going west was loaded with ideological baggage: claims by its owners and the robber barons who were driving it about the promise of freedom. Ben Marks, a small-time grifter, just observed what it did. Marks ran three-card monte games on the trains and was the first person to move his con off the trains and onto a fixed point on land in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He realized that it was better to fleece a transient population as it passed in front of you than to be part of that population. That's what spammers do as well. They develop an inadvertent map of how the network operates and create a great mass of dye in the water that can be followed to see what the machine does.

Have you sent any spam yourself?

I wouldn't know—spam is something that tends to be diagnosed by other people.

Do you have a favorite type of spam?

Yes, there's a particular spam trope, which is advertising fake Rolexes and fake college degrees. Embedded in its source code are fragmentary sentences that always mention a year from the last two centuries and then popular search terms. So it might say, "In 1895, Britney Spears Powerball." "In 1974, Vietnam War Pepsi-Cola." Occasionally the map we have of that period would appear to correspond with the spam fragment. But spammers use those phrases because the message has to pass through the filters. There's a very public battle between the spammers and the filter writers. Each is teaching the other—you train your filters according to the spam that has already been received: "Viagra," not "Vipagra." So spam must find new algorithmic ways of creating legitimate language. Another of my favorites is when they steal text from nineteenth-century novels. It's in the canon; of course it's going to pass through the filters.

Why is the book called *Fair Use*?

It's a little bit of a provocation. In some ways, fair use is the argument the spammers make: the network is there, and it's entirely legitimate to use it for spamming. Also, there are examples of fair use that exist within the network, public or quasi-public-domain materials that are exchanging hands. I'm thinking in particular of a scambaiter who received a spam e-mail from Nigeria and in turn e-mailed the gang an image of a painting that shows various dead celebrities [James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, Humphrey Bogart and Elvis Presley]. The baiter wanted to know that he was speaking to a human and not an automated message. So he asked the recipients in Nigeria to re-create that image, which they did. The gang sent back several images of themselves in a bar re-creating the poses from this painting. It's a kind of Turing test—Alan Turing proposed a test of how we were going to tell computers and humans apart.

What do you like about the language of spam?

The linguist David Maurer wrote a book called *The Big Con*, a linguistic study in the 1940s that inadvertently ended up being the great sociological study of the con trade in America. In it he describes a device used in the early twentieth century called a cackle-bladder. It's a small piece of pigskin that's filled with chicken blood and can be used to produce special effects. I once received a spam e-mail that had the subject line "Cackle-bladder." I'm probably the one person on the planet to get quite so much joy out of that. The other one that I really liked was when I found a Samuel Beckett quote in spam, which was, "To find a form that accommodates the mess, that is the task of the artist now." I think it was selling generic software.

Do individuals or programs plug in the quotes?

You need individuals to run the program. One thing that attracts me to spam are the faint traces of humor and irony and spectral agency that appear in some of the lines. Nineteenth-century novels tend to get plundered for data—Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, or *The Master Key*, the L. Frank Baum story about a boy who experiments with electricity, the last line of which is, "It's no fun being a century ahead of the times!" Or *Great Expectations*. There's this vague, faint sense that someone's chosen this for a reason. And the fragments culled from the novels are often very pleasurable in that context.

What are your thoughts on privacy online?

We routinely put into the public realm data that would have once been routinely private. And we feel entitled to have access to all the information we want, when we want it, all the time, unfiltered—a pure neoliberal ecstasy of information. But we reserve the right to feel violated at any time. As for spam, it seems to be quite a useful way for thinking about some of the hypocrisy around globalization: this information goes everywhere, freely, in this apparently frictionless environment, which compared with the movement of people is a huge and obvious disparity. But we don't want to see it; we don't want to deal with it. We want to ignore it; we want our filters to control it; and we don't particularly want to know how those filters operate. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Orchids and Lilacs

by NICHOLAS GUYATT

Angels and Ages
A Short Book About Darwin, Lincoln, and Modern Life.
By Adam Gopnik.
Knopf. 211 pp. $24.95.

Darwin's Sacred Cause
How a Hatred of Slavery Shaped Darwin's Views on Human Nature.
By Adrian Desmond and James Moore.
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 484 pp. $30.

Banquet at Delmonico's
Great Minds, the Gilded Age, and the Triumph of Evolution in America.
By Barry Werth.
Random House. 362 pp. $27.

Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln were born on the same day: February 12, 1809. As historical coincidences go, this isn't quite as stunning as John Adams and Thomas Jefferson departing this world within a few hours of each other in 1826. Not only were Adams and Jefferson architects of the American Revolution, but they died on the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Darwin and Lincoln never met or corresponded, and they distinguished themselves in very different endeavors. But Adam Gopnik uses the coincidence of their birth to make the case, in *Angels and Ages*, for their shared significance as "prophets of liberal civilization." Lincoln and Darwin have incontestable claims to posterity: one saved the Union from collapse and altered the course of history; the other developed the single most important scientific idea about life on our planet. Both retain a power to fascinate: for Gopnik, Lincoln and Darwin have "never been more present."

Gopnik depicts the two men as "snails with sublime purposes" who inched toward mighty conclusions. You know the obvious ones: the need for liberty and union to triumph over slavery and secession, the power of natural selection to explain the development of every living organism. Gopnik argues that these men shared an even deeper insight. They came to believe in "a world without a present God but with providential purposes." Both rejected orthodox religious doctrines and embraced rationalism and science, yet they imagined a higher purpose for humanity. Gopnik has a variety of names for their vision: "enchanted secularism," "natural universalism," "mystical materialism." By the end of his book, he's become a passionate advocate for the same outlook.

What Gopnik offers in the preceding pages is accessible and nicely turned hagiography, which detaches Darwin and Lincoln from their times and draws attention away from their quirks and limitations. There's a dash of mystery—did Lincoln's first eulogizer, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, declare on the president's deathbed that he belonged to the angels, or to the ages? Mostly, though, the book treads familiar ground. The best parts are about writing; from *On the Origin of Species* to the Gettysburg Address, Gopnik says that both men were committed to a plain-spoken style that allowed for moments of transcendence. They were proponents of a "literary eloquence" shaped by the existence and intelligence of a mass audience; both men searched for the truth—about the natural world or politics—and both recognized the need to convey their convictions to the public.

By turning Lincoln and Darwin into champions of modern liberal persuasion, Gopnik is fashioning a usable past for our troubled times. One can hear echoes of Paul Berman or Christopher Hitchens as Gopnik describes what's at stake in venerating his heroes and why we shouldn't take their achievements for granted. ("There *is* a constant struggle between the spirit of free inquiry and the spirit of fundamentalist dogma," Gopnik observes.) The cost of this approach, in which Lincoln and Darwin are retrofitted to withstand the shocks of contemporary debates, is fidelity to detail and the bigger picture of the nineteenth century. Gopnik's occasional prickliness toward scholarly historians—at one point he complains about the "quavers and qualifications of professional history" that would marginalize the role of Lincoln's election in hastening Southern secession—only serves to draw attention to his overreaching.

In his rush to praise Darwin as a solitary genius, Gopnik downplays the naturalist's extraordinary reliance on networks of information and promotion that were transforming knowledge in the Victorian world. Darwin drew upon an incredible array of correspondents in his research, and he retreated behind a well-tended group of partisans who promoted his theories in everything from the *Times* of London to the meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. (During these meetings, at which the bishop of Oxford denounced natural selection, one of Darwin's disciples sensationally remarked that he'd rather have an ape for a grandfather than a man of the cloth who "introduc[es] ridicule into a grave scientific discussion.") Gopnik nonchalantly observes that "almost everyone" read Darwin, but the dissemination of Darwinian ideas relied to a great extent on the published writings of other people, many of whom had very different ideas about the role of evolution in shaping contemporary affairs.

With Lincoln, the challenge is to present the president as an enchanted secularist in spite of indelible evidence for his religious commitment. Gopnik's platform is the Second Inaugural Address, which "feels so familiar that it is hard for us to grasp how complicated it is." Most Americans can probably remember a bit of the speech, which Lincoln delivered a few weeks before his death: it's the one in which he talked about God favoring neither the North nor the South completely, and made the jarring claim that the war would be justified by the sin of slavery even if it lasted for 250 years. As Gopnik wrings the address for evidence of Lincoln's spiritual crisis, his eloquence falters and he spins a web of qualifications that sounds like a rental car agreement:

> If we accept what God knew to be the evil of slavery into the world, and into America, for some mysterious purpose but with a definite lease, intending to end it, and if God made the war so horrible in order to punish those who brought the evil into the country (notwithstanding that God deliberately failed to prevent them from doing it in the first place), then does this strange equation make us believe less in a God capable of acting so bizarrely? Well, no, Lincoln says, even if that were so, "still it must be said that 'the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"

The strained conclusion is that Lincoln, like Job, came to view history with a "mystical resignation." Gopnik asserts that Lincoln used his Second Inaugural to tell Americans (if they were listening very carefully) that "the war is willed by fate for reasons that we cannot fully know but that must have something to do with the balancing scales of long historical time."

Nicholas Guyatt teaches American history at the University of York in England. In September he will be a fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The more prosaic explanation would be that Lincoln, mindful that the war was nearly over, was looking to the challenge of reunion and the need to bring white Southerners back into the fold. In March 1865 it was a lot easier to invoke a conflict lasting for 250 years than it would have been even six months earlier. This new insistence on God punishing North and South was a clear corrective to the triumphalist sermons of many Northern preachers who, emboldened by the impending collapse of Lee's army in Virginia, aligned God with the Union cause alone. You don't need to see Lincoln as Job to make sense of the speech: it was theologically persuasive and politically useful to insist that both sides had been humbled for their complicity in American slavery.

When Lincoln talked about Providence, he wasn't referring to the historical process or to fate but to a God who intervened directly in history. In this, he shared the religious mindset of most mid-century Americans, and the experience of war only sharpened his convictions. If Stanton did say at Lincoln's bedside that he belonged to the ages, committing him to posterity rather than to God, he was hardly representative: the country responded to the president's death with a wave of eulogies that searched for God's purpose in removing Lincoln from the scene. Some thought him another Moses, destined to die before reaching the promised land of reunion; a few suggested that he had been swept from the stage by God to make way for a politician who could tackle the very different challenges of Reconstruction. But there was no doubt among Americans that Lincoln was on the side of the angels.

Ever since Gopnik wrote an essay about 9/11 in which he compared the smell of carnage at the World Trade Center to the aroma of "smoked mozzarella," he's been upbraided for bourgeois self-absorption. After Mayor Michael Bloomberg's decision in 2004 to make the street signs larger to assist bewildered out-of-towners, Gopnik raged against the intrusion upon his sightlines and the "Americanization" of New York City: "If you don't know where you are, you don't deserve to be here." *Angels and Ages* suffers from the same myopia and brittleness, especially in its pre-emptive strikes on picky historians who might be troubled by all the corner-cutting. But the book's most startling characteristic is its headlong preachiness. The presumption here is that modern life is hard, with our resigned atheism and our simultaneous yearning for something cosmic, and that we would benefit from some enchanted guidance on how to get through the day. For all his admiration of Lincoln's pithy prose, Gopnik's secular sermons sound more like fortune cookies than the Second Inaugural: "The world is round and feels flat; our lives are flat and feel round." "A life without Christmas would be a life without stars." Or, in the book's final lines, "Sunday feelings are as real as Monday facts." (Are Tuesdays still with Morrie?) By the time you reach Gopnik's conclusion, in which he makes his plea for a life of grounded transcendence, you'll either forgive the fraying connections between Lincoln, Darwin and the modern American or find yourself estranged from Gopnik. In either case, you'll discover that this book has more to say about modern life than about either of its subjects.

Charles Darwin's scientific genius has rarely been questioned, and his discreet rejection of religion has recently attracted a new set of admirers. The political implications of his theorizing have been more troublesome. Social Darwinism, the application of "survival of the fittest" to human interactions, is probably a misnomer; it was Herbert Spencer rather than Darwin who focused evolution and natural selection upon society, and Spencer's ideas had gained traction even before *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859. But Darwin's assault on traditional ideas about creation and the divine shaping of life has presented opportunities to racists, eugenicists and opponents of the welfare state: if the principle of "survival of the fittest" guides humanity as well as the rest of the animal kingdom, argued even his contemporaries, then perhaps there was good reason to let the poor starve, or the nations of Europe overrun indigenous peoples in Australia or Africa.

In *Darwin's Sacred Cause*, Adrian Desmond and James Moore want to choke off these uncomfortable associations and also (like Gopnik) breathe life into the images of a stern Darwin that come down to us from Victorian photography. Their solution is to argue that his scientific endeavors—the five years of traveling the globe in the 1830s, the painstaking and protracted experiments in his home, countless hours spent peering at barnacles or pigeon skeletons—were animated by a profound humanitarianism that ranged itself against slavery, the paramount evil of the age. Most books about Darwin mention his abolitionism in passing; Desmond and Moore claim to have unearthed "radical" evidence suggesting that "a hatred of slavery shaped Darwin's views on human evolution."

Darwin's family had a proud antislavery record. His grandfather Josiah Wedgwood pledged the support of his famous pottery company to the cause of antislavery leaders Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce in the 1780s. Darwin's wife, a Wedgwood cousin, kept alive this commitment and became an avid reader of the radical British abolitionist Harriet Martineau (a family friend), Boston firebrand William Lloyd Garrison and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Darwin was strongly influenced by his encounters with nonwhite people, from his student days in Edinburgh, when he received taxidermy lessons from a freed slave called John Edmonstone, to his many excursions during the voyage of HMS *Beagle*. Just a few months after Darwin shipped out on the Beagle in December 1831, he glimpsed the horrors of Brazilian slavery and began to record his angry objections in his notebooks. "Every individual who has the glory of having exerted himself on the subject of slavery," he wrote after seeing Brazil, "may rely on it [that] his labours are exerted against miseries perhaps even greater than he imagines."

When he returned from his epic journey in 1836, Darwin began working on species and descent in the midst of a fiery debate on both sides of the Atlantic about the origin of human races. During the eighteenth century, science and religion upheld monogenesis, the belief that humanity was descended from a single point of origin. All men were created equal, or at least from the same stock, and differences in physical appearance or intellectual achievement could be attributed to climate or social opportunity. Not everyone believed this before 1830—Thomas Jefferson was famously skeptical of black mental ability—but most people did, even in the South. In the 1820s and '30s, a new wave of scientists and hucksters challenged monogenesis, drawing upon phrenology and a zeal for promoting the permanent inferiority and superiority of certain races. The proponents of polygenesis argued that the races had been created separately: the evidence from ancient skulls, Egyptian art and other sources suggested that black people in 1000 BC looked rather like black people in the nineteenth century. (Damningly, those Egyptian pictures suggested that blacks had been slaves back then, too.)

This science found enthusiasts throughout the American South, and it made inroads in Northern states and in the British Isles before Darwin's decisive rebuttals. Polygenesis may even have enjoyed the quiet support of the Confederacy: Desmond and Moore suggest that the particularly toxic Anthropological Society, founded in London in 1863,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was an arm of Confederate diplomacy during the Civil War, looking to secure British acceptance of the new slave nation by denying the unity of mankind. *Darwin's Sacred Cause* weaves his criticism of these ideas with the story of nineteenth-century abolitionism. At the same time, the harnessing of Darwin's scientific passion to a moral crusade makes him seem less distant and forensic than we usually imagine.

It's tempting to rest upon the same conclusion reached by Darwin's colorful older brother, Erasmus, after reading *Origin of Species*: "If the facts won't fit in, why, so much the worse for the facts." Darwin hated slavery, and Desmond and Moore do a marvelous job of juxtaposing his careful research agenda with the reckless theorizing of the polygenists. But did Darwin actually embrace the "brotherhood of man"? And did his research or his writing have any impact on political debates about race and slavery?

The first question is hard to answer. For such a groundbreaking thinker, Darwin was extraordinarily cautious. He secretly sketched his ideas about evolution in the late 1830s, but he wrote them up only two decades later when a rival naturalist, Alfred Russel Wallace, wrote an essay about natural selection that threatened to scoop his discoveries. In some ways, this meticulous approach to science bolsters the argument: perhaps Darwin really was thinking about humanity when he spent years on his barnacles and pigeons, opting for this safer scientific terrain while remaining closely attuned to debates on human origins. Desmond and Moore have taken the trouble to read Darwin's own copies of the most infamous works of race science, and they are superbly poised to interpret the scorings and exclamations with which he filled up the margins. But Darwin said almost nothing publicly about human origins, or the thorny question of race, until he published *The Descent of Man* in 1871. If he believed in the 1850s that he had an understanding of race that could help the abolitionists, he kept it to himself.

A bigger problem with *Darwin's Sacred Cause* is the uncertainty over the political consequences of racial unity. Although he believed that races were descended from the same origin, Darwin was fuzzier on differences among the peoples of the modern world. He was silent on the future of emancipated slaves in the United States, though in this he was following a more general reluctance on both sides of the Atlantic to explore the social consequences of emancipation. He read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Frederick Law Olmsted's Southern travelogues, antislavery bestsellers from the 1850s that endorsed the removal of slaves to a land in which they might receive, in Olmsted's phrase, "freedom and the most complete fair play." But there is nothing in *Darwin's Sacred Cause* (or in any of Darwin's published works) on the social experiment of Reconstruction and the project of enshrining black equality in law. Darwin looked ahead in *Descent of Man* to "some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, [in which] the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world." Unlike many of his contemporaries, Darwin didn't rush to embrace this extermination as evidence of progress; yet he did nothing to undermine its logic, or to consider the example of a previously "savage" race in America that was now, nominally at least, an integral part of the world's largest democracy.

Desmond and Moore triumphantly demonstrate that Darwin rejected the phony science of polygenesis. It's harder to accept the argument that by promoting monogenesis, he was driving a stake into slavery. The problem, as Desmond and Moore quietly admit, is that slavery did not rest upon the idea that blacks were a separate species. Although this notion quickened the pulse of some slaveholders and race theorists, it threatened venerable proslavery arguments that were based on the Bible. It also undermined religion more generally: an account of creation that brushed aside Adam and Eve would produce rationales for racism only at the expense of theological crisis. The Confederacy, for all its commitment to slavery, was hardly a godless place. (When drafting a new constitution in the spring of 1861, Confederate legislators declared that the only defect of the US Constitution was its failure explicitly to acknowledge the control of Providence over human affairs.) And so *De Bow's Review*, the New Orleans journal that provided a forum for polygenesis in the decade before the Civil War, warned Southerners away from their calipers and skulls in April 1861: "The man of science will see at once that it is only weakening the argument on the subject of domestic slavery, to contend for the negro a separate creation. There is no necessity for it, and to sustain it you must discard revelation." More pointedly: "'Thus saith the Lord' is far more potent in convincing men of the path of duty, or of right, than all reasoning based upon supposed hypothesis."

Desmond and Moore are more persuasive when they suggest that Darwin's objection to slavery was based on its cruelty: there was something affective rather than intellectual about his moral outrage. How to connect humanitarianism with evolutionary biology? Darwin gave some thought to this question. Perhaps, he argued in *Descent of Man*, sympathy for others—necessary within savage tribes for defensive purposes—had been magnified within "civilised societies." Tribes or nations able to translate this sympathy into patriotism and sacrifice for the common good "would be victorious over most other tribes; and this would be natural selection." But just a few paragraphs later, he observed that propping up the "weak members of civilised societies" with asylums, poor laws and hospitals—and especially allowing these "weak members" to reproduce—"must be highly injurious to the race of man." Still, to "check our sympathy" for the weak would force us to damage "the

Women's Poetry

I, too, dislike it.
However,

I was trying to not think
when out of the gaping wound
of the car-detailing garage (smells like metallic sex)
came a Nissan GT-R fitted with an oversized spoiler.
Backing out sounded like clearing the throat of god.
A gold snake zizzed around the license plate.
Sunburst hubcaps, fancy undercarriage installation
casting a pool of violet light on the pocked pavement
of gum blots. Was it this that filled me with desire?

DAISY FRIED

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS

Is this the tipping point for transformation?

Humanity is facing the death throes of a socially unjust economic system, and the task of finding new, sustainable solutions is daunting.

Fortunately, a group of enlightened teachers, led by Maitreya, the World Teacher, are here to inspire us to create a brilliant new era based on sharing the world's resources.

www.TheEmergence.org/nm

888-242-8272

PROGRESSIVE ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES

INSIGHT IN A 20 MINUTE READ WITH THE SOLUTION TO OUR FINANCIAL CRISIS

WWW.ECONOMICSFORDEMOCRATS.COM

WWW.THENATIONMART.COM

Nation Mart

noblest part of our nature." There is something uncomfortably (but unsurprisingly) paternalist about his conclusion: "Hence we must bear without complaining the undoubtedly bad effects of the weak surviving and propagating their kind." There may be a recognition of human brotherhood in this, but it isn't a blueprint for egalitarianism.

One of the challenges in engaging Darwin is that he was, above all, an observer: his theories and writing emerged at a glacial pace and depended on a focus that was heroically patient. He was hardly cut out to be an activist, and on the rare occasions that he nudged his friends toward abolition or professed his sympathy toward the slaves, he quickly scurried back to his study: "Heaven knows why I trouble you with my speculations," he apologized to his Harvard friend Asa Gray, after briefly pressing the abolitionist cause in a letter of 1861. "I ought to stick to orchids."

Perhaps Lincoln and Darwin have something else in common: they brought extraordinary ideas to fruition, but they didn't gratify their public's desire (and ours) for a full accounting of their significance. Lincoln's most famous speeches are the Second Inaugural and the Gettysburg Address, each a miracle of concision. He laid the groundwork for the incorporation of black people as citizens of the United States, but he said tantalizingly little about the challenges of integration and a multiracial democracy. Although Darwin lived until 1882 and kept up an active correspondence, he placed strict limits on his public appearances and pronouncements: to see Charles Darwin outside his Kent village was a rarity, and to know what he was thinking you had to wait for his next book (which was probably about facial expressions or earthworms rather than, say, the fate of British India). Even by the standards of the day these men were unobliging celebrities, and our desire to lift them out of their historical setting distracts us from the people who actually mediated their ideas for a contemporary audience.

These figures are the subject of Barry Werth's *Banquet at Delmonico's*, an important diversion from this year's raft of anniversary books. Werth writes about the period from 1871 to 1882 and promises to chronicle "the triumph of evolution in America" after the Civil War. His main protagonist is Herbert Spencer, the British writer who applied evolutionary concepts to social analysis and became even more famous than Darwin. The book offers vivid sketches of Spencer and his American devotees, who ranged from the libidinous preacher Henry Ward Beecher to the steel baron Andrew Carnegie. These men were rarely out of the papers, they wielded political and economic power and they drove ahead with abandon. On one level, the book is a study of how ideas are understood, reworked, mangled and applied to society: *Banquet at Delmonico's* is like a racier version of *The Metaphysical Club*, Louis Menand's worthy study of the origins of pragmatism. But by focusing on the 1870s, with Lincoln dead and Darwin mostly silent on the pressing questions of the day, Werth also offers a portrait of how ideas can be transformed if their originators vacate the public sphere.

After the Civil War, the major American misreading of Darwin—which may simply have reflected a preference for Spencer—was that evolution promised progress. Darwin was clear, in both *Origin of Species* and *Descent of Man*, that neither natural selection nor sexual selection guaranteed improvements over time. An organism might be thrown off course by accidents and contingencies—disease, climate change—that upset the natural order of things, and even slight variations in circumstances could have enormous effects. Spencer, and especially his American audience, concluded instead that "survival of the fittest" (Spencer's phrase) promised to advance society wherever it was permitted to operate freely. Some of the best parts of Werth's book sketch the application of this dogma to the terrible recession of 1873–78, during which the government bowed to Spencerian lobbyists and did nothing to increase the money supply or stimulate spending.

Spencer was considerably more complicated than his most famous phrase suggests: he befriended socialists, believed in legal aid and even the redistribution of land, and on his eventual visit to America in 1882 berated his hosts for working too hard (hypocritically, given his own bouts of industry). Werth doesn't offer much in the way of interpretation or big ideas, preferring to leave his characters and stories to speak for themselves. But what comes across clearly in his book is that while blacks and Indians were further marginalized in the 1870s by the collapse of Reconstruction and conflicts over the federal reservations policy, and while poor people starved in overcrowded slums, many of the most famous men in America embraced the idea that the United States was on the side of inexorable progress. A society in retreat from social and economic intervention took refuge in evolutionary principles even as it abdicated its responsibility to the neediest. In all of this, the better angels of Darwin and Lincoln didn't count for much. ■

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Classified

While we reserve the right to edit, reject or reclassify any advertisement, The Nation *wishes its readers to know we don't have the facilities to check the promises made by our advertisers, and we have a strong presumption against censoring any advertisement, especially if we disagree with its politics. To advertise, contact amanda@thenation.com or call (212) 209-5414. Mail inquiries to* The Nation *Classified Department, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.*

ANCIENT SECRETS

TOO REAL TO BE FICTION, *Scamming God* provides the most radical interpretation yet of the historical Jesus. morganibarra.com or Amazon.com.

BLOGS/WEB

READ UP-TO-THE-MINUTE NEWS. Politics, business, travel, political blogs, celebrity news, bios…more. jonesnyhistory.com; famouswelsh.com.

BOOKS

DEBUT BOOK OF POETRY. *HOLDING FIVE ACES* by Benjamin Rogers. Available at Lulu.com. $7.95. Good reviews.

LOVE, WAR, FIRE, WIND: *Looking Out From North America's Skull*. Poems by Eliot Katz, art by William T. Ayton. "Eliot Katz is among a handful of contemporary American poets whose work speaks to me."—Howard Zinn. Available online at Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble, others.

'JEWS, MORMONS, MUSLIMS, MURDER, MAYHEM AND MONEY' *and Where 'God' Came From*. Ritchie Franklin, editor. For a sketch and to order, visit jamminentllc.com.

***THE PRICE OF DEATH* BY S.J. ROBINSON,** a romantic mystery exposing the shocking practices behind the scenes in US healthcare—you'll demand reform! Now in paperback for $14.95. Available at Amazon.com and sjrobinson.com.

CONQUERED FROM WITHIN. $25. Don Rumsfeld, imperial government, history of mega-corps, Rove, Wolfowitz, Cheney. erbepublishingcompany.com.

DON'T LET THE TITLE FOOL YOU. *Dr. Lumumba's Dream of Incest* is not a dirty book. (888) 280-7715. Also available at Amazon.com.

THERE'S TALK ABOUT THE LEGACY OF A PRESIDENT. So, what about a person's Karmic Legacy? Read *Cause and Development of All Illness* and learn more. 256 pp., $21.95, postage included. universal-spirit.org. PO Box 3549, Woodbridge, CT 06525. (800) 846-2691.

SMOKE AND MURDERS. Cover and excerpt: smokeandmurders.com. The crime: allamosa.com.

SPANKING STORIES! 35-page catalog. Send $3 to CF Publications, PO Box 706N, Setauket, NY 11733.

LIBERAL LIAISONS

If responding to a Nation Box number, send replies to: Nation Box ___ , The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

FETISHES AND FANTASIES fulfilled. Hot erotic talk with creative, sensuous woman. No limits. Personal, confidential. Call (866) 844-8286.

MATURE, INTELLIGENT CONVERSATION. Erotic, imaginative, independently operated. missaria.com. (866) 454-3763.

AURAL EROTICA. Well heeled, well spoken, not always well behaved. Fetish friendly, smart & sexy. (800) 717-LIZZ (5499); ElizabethPaxton.com.

LIBERAL LIAISONS

GREEN SINGLES. Free photo ads for progressive singles in the environmental, vegetarian and animal rights communities. Searchable listings for friendship, dating, marriage. Since 1985. greensingles.com.

DWM: SENIOR, rural Northern California. Honest, handsome, slender, youthful. Seeks LTR with lady, any age. petbahl@msn.com.

52-YEARS-YOUNG WHITE MALE. Healthy, educated, easygoing. Locked in but not locked out. Thoughtful, sensitive, good listener. Seeking intelligent, warmhearted lady for correspondence or more. Alan Stasinski, 82A 0173, Box 3600, Marcy, NY 13403-3600.

MERCHANDISE

Talk Back Tees
RecessionWear! *Great* quality, funny and cheap t-shirts for liberals.
talkbacktees.com (800) 777-9242

EXPRESS YOURSELF! Stickers, shirts, buttons, emblems and more—evolvefish.com. (800) 386-5846 for catalog or to order now.

SUPPORT *THE NATION* AND OUR NATION! Shop online at thenationmart.com and exercise subtle and not-so-subtle dissent. Most items are union-made. Great gifts!

CHECK OUT 401BROKE.COM. 401(k) or 403(b) in the dumps? Spend what's left on some funny, affordable gifts.

OPPORTUNITIES

HIGHEST $ CASH $ FOR GOLD jewelry to *Nation* subscribers. Mail it in: The Gold Exchange, 4755 Van Dyke, Shelby Township, MI 48317. (586) 739-5530. RandolphJewelers.com.

ORGANIZATIONS

NASHVILLE, TENN., *Nation* discussion group. Contact Howard Romaine. hromaine@gmail.com.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., *Nation* discussion group is looking for new members. Call Tom George at (203) 795-5472 for more information.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

CIRCULATION FULFILLMENT MANAGER: *The Nation* magazine, a prestigious subscription-driven weekly, seeks self-directed manager to handle all facets of fulfillment including: print orders; billing & renewal management; master scheduling; management reports (Excel/SmartLink or equivalent); liaison with fulfillment services, printer, newsstand distributor, subscription agents, USPS. Must be detail-oriented, accurate and have good communication skills. Hands-on experience working with PCD or similar service bureau is required. Knowledge of digital and print subscription marketing and fulfillment, including Internet and e-mail subscription marketing, is critical. We offer excellent benefits, a pleasant work environment and a competitive salary. *The Nation* is an equal opportunity employer. Send cover letter, résumé and salary requirement to circmgrjob@thenation.com. No calls or recruiters, please.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

PAUL STEIN, PhD. Psychotherapy (Jung's approach), relationship(s). Initial consult no charge. NYC office or phone work. (646) 709-8634.

REAL ESTATE

MOVING TO FAIRFIELD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT? Realtor seeks clients of same persuasion as a *Nation* subscriber. Contact (203) 259-2519 or madgecanning.com.

LEFT COAST, US. Work with The Realtor Who's on Your Side. Norma J.F. Harrison. (510) 526-3968. (866) 264-9029. NormaHa@pacbell.net.

GREATER SACRAMENTO–AREA REALTOR seeks progressive clients. Margo McBride, Remax Professionals. (916) 721-8334. margomcbride@comcast.net. margomcbride.com.

TRAVEL

SMALL, EXCLUSIVE, IN-DEPTH TOUR TO EGYPT. November 3–16. Inquire for details: mm@jbatravel.com; (866) 740-1087.

Events

NATIONAL

Economy Connection

■ War and global capitalism. Unemployment and recession. Wealth, poverty and inequality. Economy Connection, a project of the Union for Radical Political Economics (URPE), can provide speakers on these and related topics for formal or informal events sponsored by community groups, unions, high schools, colleges or political organizations. Contact us at (201) 792-7459 or soapbox@comcast.net.

NEW YORK

2009 URPE Summer Conference

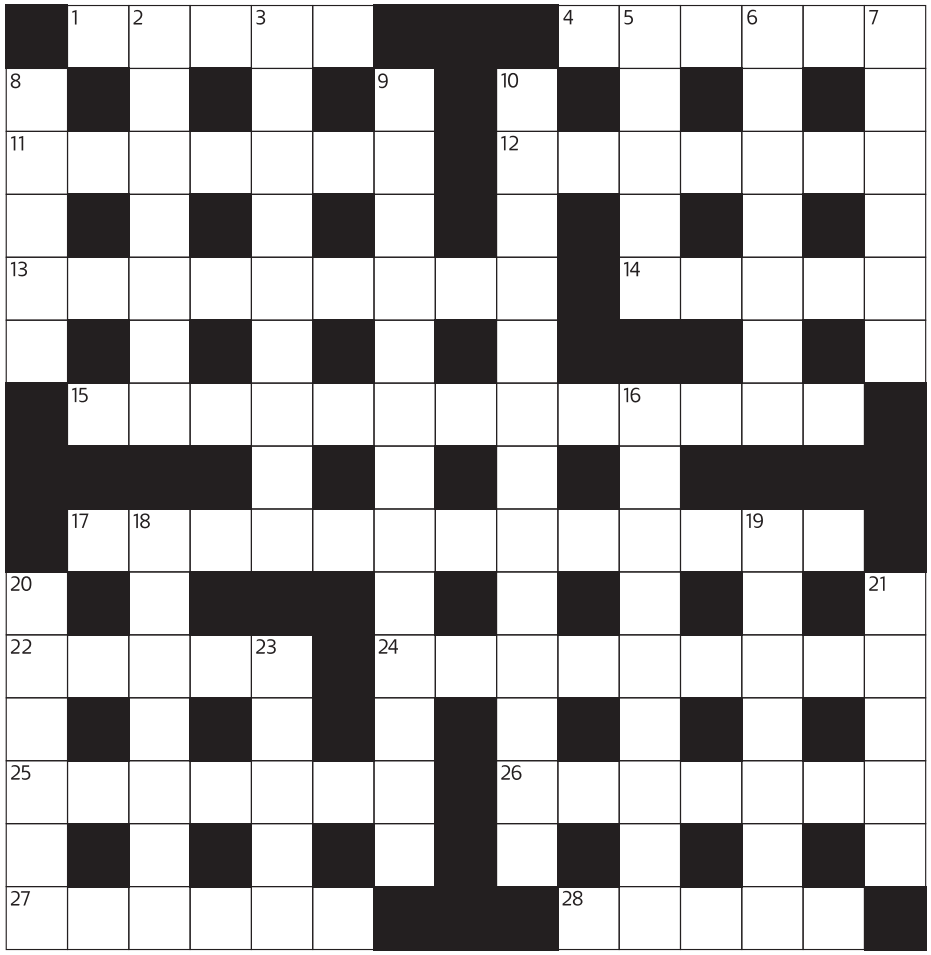
■ Economic Crises: Opportunities for Radical Change. Saturday, August 15, through Tuesday, August 18, Camp Deer Run, Pine Bush, New York. Register by July 31 for discounted rate. Plenaries include: "Radical Restructuring and Institutions" with Paul Cooney, Jane D'Arista, Gerald Epstein and Matias Vernengo; "Grassroots Organizing and Responses" with Jenny Brown of the Labor Party; and the David Gordon Lecture ("Finance Without Financiers: Prospects for Radical Change in Financial Governance") by Gerald Epstein. And lots of workshops! Camp Deer Run, at the foot of the Shawangunk Mountains, provides opportunities for swimming, basketball, volleyball, badminton and hiking. Children are welcome. Rates: sliding scale. For more information, contact URPE at urpe@labornet.org or (413) 577-0806, or visit our website at urpe.org.

The advertising deadline for Events is every Thursday. Rates: $210 for 50 words; $260 for 75 words, additional words (above 75) $2.00 each. To place an ad, call Amanda at (212) 209-5414.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Puzzle No. 3174

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Do members of them call each other "mates," which is wrong? (5)

4 The Egyptian judge of the dead, returning so with the flower? (6)

11 Ted, strung out over a drug problem, took a long, hard slog. (7)

12 Attained fame and success with the District Attorney briefly jumping back over a turbulent river. (7)

13 The skeleton seems to deliberately get one in trouble, on the job. (9)

14 see 27

15 Ordinary troops. (As a matter of custom, makes you do something!) (7,6)

17 A shopper looking for a good deal at the drinking spot, to win one out for the game… (7,6)

22 …with drinks served to everyone. (5)

24 A city in Massachusetts, with the start of the fight lost, and you get to steal back with nothing. (9)

25 Have a little talk, and let back what should belong to you. (7)

26 It gnaws madly, which is wrecking a body's health! (7)

27 and **14** What the bird lives on suggests a council in 1521. (4,2,5)

28 Bring back the wide oceans, poetically—and hurry up! (5)

DOWN

2 The Australian bird and a ruffled teal imitate a good example. (7)

3 A city in Germany made around a large number, with common food coming up. (9)

5 The mouselike insectivore would be wily, if it had 500! (5)

6 What you may do to motor at the lake—or is it just a dream? (7)

7 Extreme cruelty makes this unhappy miss lose a point, in confusion. (6)

8 The people who work for you show something with a flag on it. (5)

9 In a crazy way, Pa's mate shows a manner characteristic to a particular language. (13)

10 The latest gossip shows just how the natives speak! (4,2,3,4)

16 A sort of carpet to eat on—but they're not exactly the winning type! (7-2)

18 Take little notice, a sort of turn is dead—but you really like things this way! (7)

19 Crazy bone comes with it, to a point, but it makes combs and buttons appear. (7)

20 A sort of support when the last month comes up short, but prepared for anything. (6)

21 You've got to make counterfeits for George, see? (5)

23 And the same to you! (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3173

W	O	R	K	I	N	G	M	A	J	O	R	I	T	Y
I		E		M		A		B		H		N		E
T	O	S	S	P	O	T		S	T	E	N	C	I	L
H		P		U		E		T		N		I		L
I	C	I	C	L	E		L	I	B	R	E	T	T	O
N		T		S		S		N		Y		E		W
O	K	E	F	E	N	O	K	E	E		O	D	E	S
N				S		R		N		P				T
E	B	B	S		T	O	U	C	H	A	N	D	G	O
S		E		B		R		E		S		I		N
G	A	L	V	A	N	I	C		P	A	L	A	T	E
R		A		G		T		S		D		B		P
A	S	S	A	G	A	I		C	R	E	M	O	N	A
S		C		E		E		U		N		L		R
P	R	O	U	D	A	S	A	P	E	A	C	O	C	K

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the second week in January, and biweekly the third week of July through the second week of September) by The Nation Company, L.P. © 2009 in the U.S.A. by The Nation Company, L.P., 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. (212) 209-5400. Washington Bureau: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: The Nation, PO Box 55149, Boulder, CO 80322-5149, or call 1-800-333-8536. Publications Mail Agreement No: 40041477. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement No.: 40612608. When ordering a subscription, please allow 4-6 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions. Basic annual subscription price: $52 for 47 issues. Back issues $6 prepaid ($8 foreign) from: The Nation, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. The Nation is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Nation, PO Box 55149, Boulder, CO 80322-5149. Printed in U.S.A. on recycled paper.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

VENACURA™

HEALTHNEWS

Erase Spider & Varicose Veins Without Surgery!

Once only available by prescription in Europe, all-natural formula noticeably reduces the appearance and embarrassment of varicose & spider veins.

If only I had known! Last summer I finally decided to give away all of my shorts and above-the-knee skirts. I'm a youthful, active woman. I try to exercise often and I think I look pretty good—at least my husband tells me so. But my spider veins and varicose veins had gotten to the point where I was too embarrassed to go out in public showing my legs.

Surgery Wasn't For Me

I've even looked into some surgical options for these hideous green and purple lines all over my legs, but let's face it, surgery is too expensive, and doctors can't promise new veins won't reappear afterwards. Realistically, I don't have the time to take off work or not be there for my family. So out the shorts and skirts went.

Used by Doctors In Europe for Decades

Then a friend told me about Venacura™, a new product she's been using that just became available here in the U.S. that reduces the appearance and embarrassment of varicose veins *naturally* without surgery. Venacura contains Diosmin 95, which has been used for years in Europe to promote healthy veins. This ingredient has been proven in clinical trials to help significantly reduce the appearance of varicose and spider veins by increasing the metabolic activity in the veins which helps to bring new life and vitality to tired legs.

Visible Results You Will See and Feel

Needless to say, I couldn't get wait to try Venacura™ for myself. I started taking it once a day and within 30 days my spider and varicose veins began to actually fade. I even noticed the swelling in my lower legs was better especially on the days when I was on my feet all day.

Now I Can Show My Legs Again

After taking Venacura™ now for a few months, my legs look and feel great. Even my husband (who doesn't notice anything) suggested maybe now with the warmer weather we should go to our community pool again sometimes *…which means exposed legs!* (he was even more embarrassed then I was). I said YES because now that I've got these smooth, younger-looking legs again, I want to show them off. Maybe this year I will get to the beach. I only wish I had heard about Venacura sooner!

Available For the First Time in U.S.

Venacura™ contains the powerful ingredient Diosmin 95, a naturally occurring flavonoid that can be isolated from various plant sources. Diosmin 95's has been used in Europe for decades as an all natural treatment for veins and the venous system. It has undergone 20 years of clinical testing and is currently used by doctors throughout Europe. After further refinement by Venacura, Diosmin 95 is now available as a once-a-day dietary supplement and for a limited time on a risk free trial basis.

What Our Customers Have To Say About Venacura…

*"I have been using Venacura for four weeks and think it is amazing. Since using Venacura I can actually see skin tone emerging. The other veins in the leg are also diminishing in color and size. I never thought there was a chance of ever wearing short skirts again; now there is hope."**

— Renee A.

Get the Younger Looking Legs That European Woman have Enjoyed for Years!

- ☑ Reduce the embarrassment of unsightly veins
- ☑ Helps with heaviness in the legs
- ☑ Reduces discomfort in legs
- ☑ Provides relief associated with prolonged standing
- ☑ Highly effective for both men and women

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to treat, diagnose, cure, mitigate or prevent any disease. * Does not provide surgical results. Results may vary.*

Trouble Finding Venacura™?

Venacura™ is the only oral supplement containing Diosmin 95 currently available in the U.S. that you can try for FREE. Venacura is not available in stores and you can only order directly from the manufacturer while limited supplies are available. The manufacturers are so confident that Venacura will makes your legs look and feel significantly younger and healthier and that you'll love the results, they are offering a 30 day risk free trial offer...because seeing is believing.

To get your supply of Venacura risk free for just a small shipping and processing fee, call today. Operators are standing by to let you try one of the greatest breakthroughs in reducing the appearance of varicose and spider veins without spending hundreds of dollars on lasers or surgery.

Call 888-589-6853 today to get your 30-Day Supply of Venacura™ Risk-Free!

Mention Promotional code VN100022 for express shipping!

venacura™

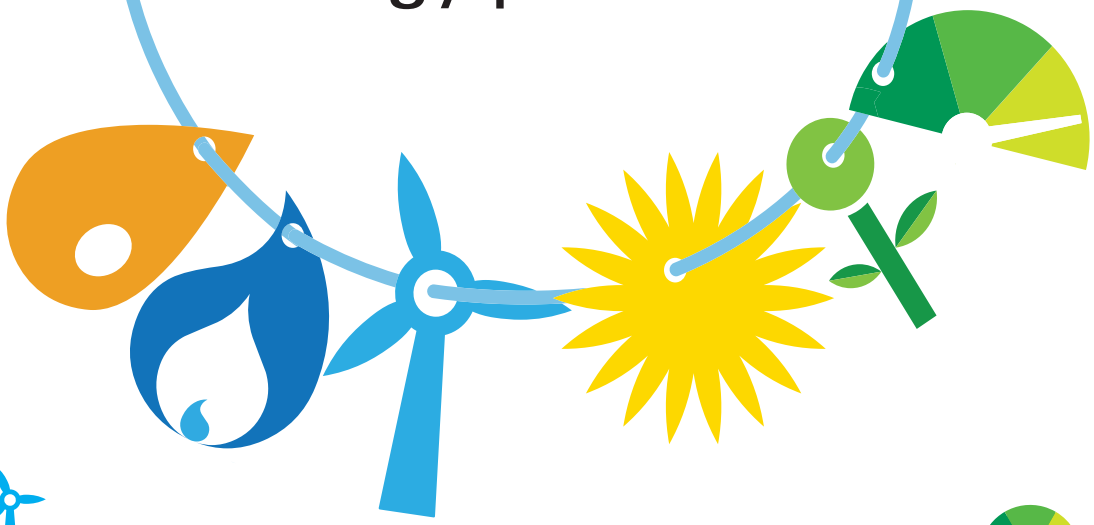
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Making the most of America's untapped energy resources is key to improving energy security and the nation's economy. Learn more at bp.com/us.

New areas offshore may hold enough reserves to fuel auto consumption for about 30 years. Our groundbreaking platforms in the Gulf of Mexico add over 400,000 barrels a day to U.S. supplies.

Demand for natural gas is growing fast. Exploring offshore could help meet energy needs. Today, natural gas accounts for over 40% of BP's hydrocarbon portfolio in the U.S.

Unlocking America's energy potential.



America's wind resources remain untapped. BP and its partners have wind projects in 4 states generating renewable energy for over 180,000 average U.S. homes.

Solar energy is heating up. We're partnering with the Department of Energy and Arizona State University to lower costs and improve solar performance.

Demand for renewable fuels is growing. BP has partnered with Verenium to accelerate the development of advanced biofuels for U.S. motorists.

Energy efficiency is a hidden resource. So we created the BP Energy Lab to help each of us reduce energy usage and carbon emissions. bp.com/energylab

bp

beyond petroleum®

© 2009 BP Products North America Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED